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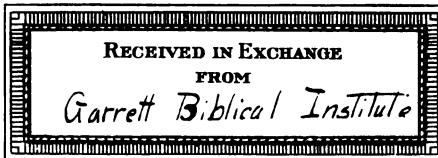
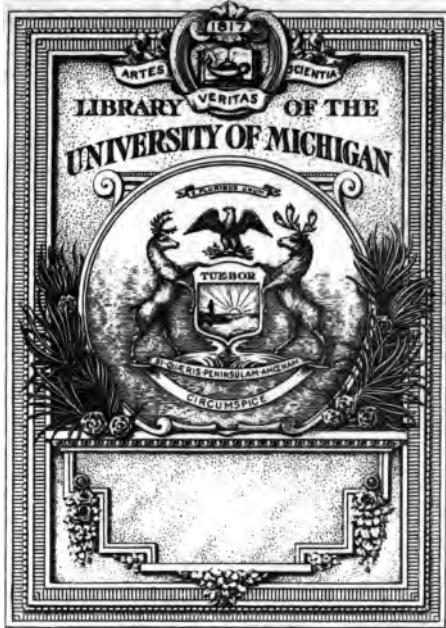
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John Hancock



JOHN HANCOCK

A CHARACTER SKETCH

BY

JOHN R. MUSICK

Author of "The Columbian Historical Novels," "Hawaii, Our New Possessions," etc.

WITH ANECDOTES, CHARACTERISTICS AND
CHRONOLOGY



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In these modern days of iconoclasm and skepticism, many honored and beloved heroes of the past are lowered to the common level of ordinary mankind. While iconoclasm is certainly carried to an extreme, nevertheless it is productive of good, in teaching that the great men of history whom we worshiped, were after all, the common clay of ordinary mortals.

Some were great men, and some were bad men, hardly worthy a place on the page of history. This tendency of writers of recent years to disparage the founders of our government, and heroes who won the independence we enjoy, with their blood, is possibly the natural reaction of writers of the preceding age to canonize them.

While "our forefathers" were only human, and by no means demigods as some past writers would represent them, they on the other hand were not the coarse, bigoted, evil minded individuals, represented by the critic of the present.

In defence of them we are pleased to state that after a careful study and research, we conclude that most of

them were honorable gentlemen, whose society was elevating, morals good, with pleasing address, and many like Washington, would "scorn some of the acts common with politicians of the present."

The charge of bribery to obtain position in any of the legislative bodies was never laid at their door, nor were corruption funds known at that time.

A recent writer in an American magazine with little reverence for the man whose bold signature first strikes the eye in glancing over the list of signers to the Declaration of Independence, asserts that John Hancock was a smuggler, a defaulter, and a man whose "private character will not bear a too close inspection." That the writer is prejudiced is evident from his failure to give the evidence for, as well as against the accused.

John Hancock, whose chief celebrity is his signature to the Declaration of Independence, was born of respectable parents, at Quincy, Massachusetts, January 12, 1737. Perhaps less is known of him than of any Revolutionary hero, or any other person who had so much to do with the growth of liberty and independence.

His family was not only respectable but influential, and his uncle who seemed to have had much to do with his career, was at one time one of the wealthiest, if not the wealthiest man in Boston.

Hancock grew up from early boyhood accustomed to polite society. History fails to record the fact that he developed any rare genius early in youth, but was simply a respectable, good mannered lad, obedient to his superiors, and a faithful scholar in school. He early

acquired a gentility which followed him through life. He entered Harvard College at an early age, and his advancement must have been phenomenal, for he was graduated at the age of seventeen.

Hancock's subsequent connection with Harvard was such as to give rise to grave suspicions. Being treasurer of the College he was so slow in making his settlements as to afford his enemies an opportunity for censure, yet the best authority to be obtained acquits him of any blame. On this subject Burrage says:

"Quincy, in his history of Harvard University, advertises strongly on Hancock, saying: 'His connection with the college was troublesome and vexatious.' As early as 1774, when they sent for the papers at Philadelphia, where Hancock had taken them for safety, seeming to fear he would lose them, the officers commenced to write and almost dictate to him about his accounts. Obtaining the documents they displaced him from his honorable office in 1777; an act which Hancock and his friends never forgave.

"Hancock frequently assured them that he had the interest of the college at heart as much as any one, and would pursue it; and the records show that he honorably fulfilled the terms of his uncle's intended bequest of Five Hundred Pounds to the library, and made liberal gifts to the same himself.

"The officers passed a vote of thanks for this lasting monument of his bounty and public affection. In 1788 he made a final settlement, but it was left to his heirs to pay over the full amount due, except the charge for

compound interest." The president of the New England Historical Society, January 1, 1896, in reference to the matter of Hancock's shortage in his accounts, says:

"Hancock had a very long controversy with the authorities at Harvard College about the funds in his hands as treasurer. His action in this matter is perfectly unaccountable. It vexed the treasurer who succeeded him, and all the committees appointed to settle with him, to the last degree, and the alumni never forgave him. The college lost nothing but rather gained by the delay, except in the matters of interest, which his executors would not pay."

The friendly reader who follows the narrative of Hancock through the troublous days of 1774 to 1777 when he was removed as treasurer of Harvard, may easily find abundant excuse for his course of action, which when we take into consideration the fact, that defalcation was never his design, ought to exonerate him from any evil intent.

Hancock at this time had his enemies as well as friends; enemies who were ever ready to criticise that portion of his conduct which they could not understand, and this may in part account for some of the scurrillous stories derogatory to his honesty.

After graduating from Harvard College at the early age of seventeen, he was taken under the guardianship of a pious uncle, who made him a clerk in his counting room, where with his native aptitude, he soon became acquainted with the various routine of business.

Hancock was quite in contrast with his Puritanic as-

sociates, the Adamses, being more of a Cavalier than a Puritan, yet the kindest of feeling seems to have existed between them.

He seems to have been the leader of fashion—the gen-



Old Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass.

teel aristocrat of the day. Here is a description of him when a young man.

"He wore a coat of scarlet, lined with silk, and embroidered with gold, white satin embroidered waist coat, dark satin small-clothes, white silk stockings, and shoes with silver buckles."

It seems that this attire with the "three cornered gold laced hat constituted the gentleman of the period." His equipage, a coach and six blooded bays, were such as had never been seen in Boston, and caused many pious

old Puritans to regard him as “a too worldly man.” He was exceedingly fond of music, dancing, parties, rich wines, dinners and all that sort of thing called elegant pleasures, so horrifying in the eyes of the Puritans. But his wealth and exalted position placed him above reach of criticism.

His love of society and rounds of pleasure seemed in no way to interfere with his business advancement. He neglected nothing, was attentive to the instructions of his superiors, and quick to comprehend. His uncle was so well pleased with his rapid advancement and honest habits, that in the year 1760 he entrusted him with a mission to England for the transaction of some very important business.

It was a rare opportunity for a youth of twenty-three, and young Hancock with his keen perception and close observation was just the person to improve it. On this occasion he was present at the funeral rites of King George II, and was also present at the coronation ceremonies of his successor, George III. Little did Hancock dream while witnessing those ceremonies which invested the new monarch with the insignia of royalty, that a tyrant was being installed over the colonies, who by means both bold and insidious, would attempt the abridgement of the liberties of the American people.

Least of all did the young man suspect that the king whose coronation he was witnessing, would in less than fifteen years proscribe him for upholding the standard of liberty, and place a price on his head.

At this time the feeling between the colonies and

mother country was good. The people expected much from the new king, as they do from every new ruler. The importance of the American colonies had long been appreciated by the British sovereign and ministry. English merchants found them a profitable market for the products of their looms and factories, and an important visitor from them, such as the representative of a great mercantile establishment was warmly welcomed.

Having been reared in the best society and a graduate of an institution, which even at that time was recognized as possessing superior advantages, as well as the representative of a wealthy house, Hancock gained admission to the best society.

It is to his credit that all the flattery and petting to which he was subjected, did not turn

his head and make an out and out Tory of him. Perhaps few young men of the present day could have resisted the snares set for Hancock. But the liberty tree was too firmly grown in his heart for flattery or cajolery to supplant it.



Liberty Tree, Boston Common.

His stay in England won for him many warm friends both in a social and business way. Stern business necessities forced him to make his visit much shorter than he wished, and it was with great regret than he left England for Boston.

Soon after his return home his uncle died, leaving him the sole possessor of his princely fortune—the largest perhaps in the province of Massachusetts.

Possessed of an extraordinary mind, and deeply conversant with political science, he soon after entering into possession of his fortune, began to devote himself to the politics of the day. In principle he was devotedly democratic, though liberal in his views. His espousing the cause of the people against the king was no doubt a surprise to some of the nobility who had safely counted on him falling into the Tory ranks.

Hancock with his wealth, influence, business ability, statesmanship and sagacity, proved a valuable acquisition to the Whig cause. Efforts were made by the royalists early in the struggle to secure him, but without avail.

Though reared in the lap of luxury, he had been rocked in the cradle of liberty, and prized the cause of the colonists too highly to abandon it for an oppressive monarchy.

From the time John Hancock entered upon his political career he became so thoroughly identified with the struggle for liberty in Massachusetts, that his biography and that history, are inseparable.

Within a little more than a generation after the com-

mencement of the “plantations” in America, the royal government of London began to make formal inquiries into the population, industries and manufactories, which were renewed until the period of the Revolution.

There was evidently a twofold object in these inquiries—a jealousy lest the colonies should grow too fast, and a desire to monopolize for the benefit of Great Britain, their trade. Manufacturing in the colonies was greatly discouraged in England, it being the desire of the mother country to make the colonies consumers of British products, and producers of raw material.

It is not necessary to a clear understanding of the position of Hancock and his co-laborers to particularize on the various acts of monopoly by Parliament. They uniformly bore heavily on the commercial and manufacturing interests of the colonies, and were designed to keep them in a firmer dependence upon England—to render them beneficial only to the mother government, and to employ and increase English shipping, and build up a place for the disposal of English manufacturers.

The peace of 1763 formed a pretext for a still more grinding policy, that of *taxing* the colonies, with the avowed purpose of a revenue into the royal exchequer, on the seemingly plausible but unwarrantable grounds, that Great Britain had contracted a debt in their defence.

Prior to this when England wanted money from the colonies, the Parliament had been content to ask for it by requisition upon the Colonial Legislature, and they had supplied it with a willing hand; but it was thought that a shorter method might be resorted to, and it was

decided to collect what they wanted, by direct taxation.

Rather than unjust duties should be imposed upon goods, the owners resorted to concealing such as were dutiable. In order to search for such articles Writs of Assistance, or orders were issued by the Superior Court of the province, requiring sheriffs and other civil officers to assist the revenue collector to whom it was granted, in breaking open and searching stores and even private dwellings, if suspected of containing prohibited goods.

Being denied representation in the law making bodies, the colonists were justified in resenting such unjust measures, which were directly in conflict with the old established rule that "a man's house is his castle."

The first application for a writ of this kind was made by a deputy collector at Salem, in November, 1760. Doubts being expressed by the court as to the legality of the writ or power of the court to grant it, the application was deferred to the next term, when the question was to be argued. At this trial Mr. James Otis made his immortal speech, in which according to John Adams he "was a flame of fire."

In all these struggles against the clutching fingers of tyranny young Hancock took a lively interest. Having large mercantile interests, and being a thorough business man, it was only natural that his mind should be early drawn to these discussions.

He was present and heard the famous appeals of Otis and Thatcher before the Superior Court, and his soul was stirred to its very depths. In the language of John Adams,

"Every man of that immensely crowded audience, went away, ready to take up arms against Writs of Assistance. *Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain.*"

None quitted that scene of excitement more determined to resist to death the encroaching tyranny of the mother country than John Hancock.

The Court postponed a decision until the following term; and in the meantime wrote to Great Britain for information on the subject. Writs were afterward granted in Massachusetts, but they were extremely unpopular, and the law was never rigidly enforced.

The next measure of British oppression and stupidity was the infamous Stamp Act passed by Parliament March 22, 1765. So infamous was the act that while pending in parliament, Mr. Pitt, General Conway, Alderman Beckford, Colonel Barré, Mr. Jackson and Sir William Merrideth opposed it, some on the grounds of expediency, others of its injustice.

This act so noted in the annals of American history; both as an act of flagrant injustice on the part of the Revolution, consisted of fifty-five specific duties, laid on as many different species of instruments in which paper was used; such as notes, bonds, mortgages, deeds, university degrees, licenses, advertisements in newspapers, and even almanacs; varying from *one half penny to six pounds.*

Great Britain seemed to misjudge the temper of her colonists and to forget they were the descendants of those

who left civilization and entered a wilderness, that they might enjoy civil and religious liberties.

It is quite true that the masses deemed it no act of outlawry to break a law in which they could have no part in making. While loyal to the laws of the Colonial legislature which they had by representatives framed, they felt no compunctions of conscience in infringing on the tyrannical enactments forced upon them by a monarchy three thousand miles away.

George III was unpopular from the first with his colonies. It had been said that his weak ambition was to erect a magnificent palace that should surpass that of any other prince in the world, and to raise the funds, he determined on taxing the American Colonies.

Their resistance increased his stubborn determination, and had he not been held in check by such wise and patriotic statesmen as Pitt, Barré, Conway, and others, there is no knowing to what extent his foolish extravagance would have gone.

The Stamp Act was ordered to go into effect in November 1765, and the people in all the colonies boldly and anxiously expressed detestation of the unholy measure.

One day in the month of August, the effigy of Andrew Oliver, the proposed stamp distributor in Massachusetts was found hanging to a tree, afterwards well known as the Liberty Tree in one of the main streets of Boston. At night it was cut down, and carried on a bier amidst the acclamations of an immense collection of people, through the court house, down King Street, to a small

brick building supposed to have been erected for the reception of the detested stamps. The building was soon leveled with the ground, and the mob now swelled to several hundred were so inflamed that they next assailed the home of Mr. Olliver, breaking the windows and destroying a part of the furniture.

The house of Benjamin Hollowell, Junior, controller of the treasury was next entered. Unfortunately the mob found liquors in the cellar, with which they kindled their rage to such an extent it became ungovernable. They next attacked the house of Lieutenant Governor Hutchinson, who after vainly attempting resistance was compelled to fly for life. His was one of the best houses in the province, but by four o'clock in the morning it was in complete ruins, nothing remaining but the bare walls and floors. The plate, family pictures, most of the furniture, the wearing apparel, about nine hundred pounds sterling, the manuscripts and books which Mr. Hutchinson had been thirty years in collecting, were either carried off or destroyed. The whole damage was estimated at two thousand five hundred pounds.

The participants in such scenes, were a motley crowd, white and black, who may be found at all times, hungry for excitement. They were not all law breakers at heart, but driven to excesses by injustice and drink, sought vengeance in the only way feasible to their excited imaginations. For these acts better and wiser men were held responsible.

It was in the midst of such trying scenes that Hancock was elected a member to the Provincial Legislature.

The people of Boston could not have made a wiser selection; not so much for his wealth and influence as for his peculiar abilities to direct thought and legislation, and for his intense love of liberty. In commenting on his election Samuel Adams said:

"Boston has done a wise thing to-day — she's made that young man's fortune her own," and this was literally true for he devoted it all to the public use.

On November 1st, the day on which the Stamp Act was to go into effect, all the bells at early dawn began to toll the knell of departing liberties; many shops and stores were closed, and effigies of the friends and authors of that act were carried about the streets, and afterwards torn to pieces by the enraged populace.

Though we may blame the inflamed populace for these acts of lawlessness, yet we must not lose sight of the fact that only by such covert acts could they express their disapprobation of a law which they had had no part in making, and no power to repeal.

It became a question of armed resistance which forced itself on the colonists, and among the first to grasp the situation, and go to the full extreme against the tyrannical measures of the government, was Hancock.

The war of the Revolution might have been brought on ten years sooner, had not a change in the British ministry brought more conservative men into power, who decided it was wiser to repeal the iniquitous stamp act, than to leave it a farce on the statute books, or uphold it by force of arms.

The repeal act reached Boston about noon Friday,

May 13, 1776, brought by John Hancock's vessel, the brig, "*Harrison*."

Great was the general joy. Church bells immediately pealed forth the glad tidings, ships hoisted their colors to the top of their masts; the "Sons of Liberty" gathered under their favorite tree, where they passed the night with bonfires, toasts and patriotic songs, interspersed with the discharge of guns.

On the common the enthusiastic citizens erected a magnificent pyramid, illuminated by two hundred and eighty lamps, the four upper stories of which were ornamented with figures of the King and Queen, and fourteen of the patriots who had distinguished themselves for their love of liberty. On the four sides of the lower apartment were appropriate poetic inscriptions.

No man of prominence in Boston was more specially concerned in the Stamp Act law than John Hancock. His open denunciations of the law in public and private caused him to be loved at home and feared abroad.

Some of his enemies have attempted to prove that Hancock was instrumental in stirring up the populace to resist with mob violence, but have never been able to convict him of the offense. In fact, he always counseled a legal rather than an illegal resistance, until revolutionary methods became the last resort.

He made himself as conspicuous in the celebration of this joyous occasion as he had been active in opposing the Stamp Act.

The King and Parliament had yielded to the wishes of the suffering people and repealed the law, and he de-

clared that the people were closer bound to their monarch than ever.

He gave a grand entertainment to the genteel part of the town, and treated the populace to a pipe of madeira wine, which had been placed on a platform erected in front of his elegantly illuminated house. The platform was constructed for a twofold purpose—to hold the pipe of wine, and a grand display of fireworks. The whole city caught the spirit of illumination and celebration from Hancock, and all the opponents of the Stamp Act kept open house, while there was general rejoicing in Boston.

The grand display concluded at eleven o'clock, when at a given signal, a horizontal fire-wheel on the top of the pyramid was set in motion, ending in the discharge of sixteen dozen serpents in the air.

When the grand panorama of light and splendor had gone out, darkness and quiet once more pervaded Boston, and the crowds dispersed, singly, or in groups until the streets were deserted and silence prevailed.

Hancock, the manager of the celebration, had conducted it with such consummate skill as to give offense to no one, everything had been done in perfect order, and the utmost good feeling prevailed.

By a previous invitation of the governor, his majesty's council met at the Province House in the afternoon, where many loyal toasts were drunk, and then in the evening they went to the common to witness the display of fire-works.

The Crown and the Provincial officers exchanged



Hancock's House, Boston.
As it appears at the present time.

congratulations; past differences were forgotten, and that 16th day of May was a *red letter day* in the memory of the people of Boston.

Before the glad sounds of rejoicing at the repeal of the Stamp Act had mellowed into the harmony of confident hope, the ministry of England by its unwise and unjust acts, again awakened loud murmurs of discontent throughout the American Colonies.

The germ of new oppression, was the Declaratory Act, which appeared so harmless at first but began to expand in the genial soil of ministerial culture. A resolution passed the House of Commons, demanding of the colonies restitution to the crown officers who had suffered loss by the Stamp Act riots. This being just, the colonies complied; Massachusetts however, in passing the Indemnification Bill, inserted a provision that a free pardon should be extended to all concerned.

Much bad feeling was engendered by the insolent manner in which the settlement of the claims was demanded. Governor Bernard of Massachusetts was so peremptory and insulting, that the people of Boston flatly refused to pay, until the governor altered his tone, when they complied.

With such spirits as Hancock, Adams and Otis stirring the people with eloquence and example, they could not become otherwise than patriotic, and never were people more jealous of their liberties than the inhabitants of Massachusetts.

Hancock was himself the most vigilant and enthusiastic of all. He infused his spirit and personality in the

cause of freedom until the people of Massachusetts soon came to look upon him as their leader in the cause of liberty.

He was so pronounced and so bold in his utterances both in public and private that he astounded both Colonists and royalists.

The latter were willing to extend to him the olive branch of peace, and would have made him powerful and popular in the world if he would have turned against his neighbors. But Hancock was too loyal to the principle of liberty to yield to any promise or advancement. He valued the esteem of the poorest patriot in Boston more highly than that of the governor of the Colony or King on the throne.

He held frequent conferences with the Adamses, who were his intimate friends, on the gravity of the situation and dangers which menaced the country.

For a man of such unbounded wealth, upon which the enemy might prey at any moment, Hancock seems to have lacked discretion. He was continually menaced with imprisonment and confiscation. But he was still a young man and, perhaps had not arrived at the ripe age of discretion when silence is thought to be golden. The modern term of "jingoism" could appropriately be applied to him.

In numerous interviews with the Adamses, Otis and others, the clause of the Annual Mutiny Act was discussed. This, Hancock properly viewed as taxation in disguise, and a measure not calculated to strengthen royal power in America, but to shift a heavy burden from

the shoulders of the home government to those of the colonies. The clause provided that the British troops that might be sent to America, should be furnished quarters, beer, salt and vinegar at the expense of the people.

Though the tax was small and easily borne, Hancock argued that it involved the principles, substantially, that were avowed in the Stamp Act; and was more odious because the intent was to make the people support bayonets sent to abridge their liberties. Not only did Hancock and Samuel Adams urge the opposition to the act at home, but abroad.

Hancock, as well as Adams, was an excellent letter writer, and enjoyed a wide range of acquaintance among the more influential men in the colonies.

Chiefly through the influence of these two men, New York and Massachusetts refused to comply with the provisions in the clause in the Annual Mutiny Act, and opposition, as zealous as that against the Stamp Act, was aroused.

The Mutiny Act granted power to every officer, upon obtaining a warrant from a justice, to break into any house, by day or night, in search of deserters.

Like Writs of Assistance, these powers might be, and indeed were used by unprincipled men for other than ostensible purposes; and the guaranty of the British constitution that every man's house was his castle, and inviolate, was subverted.

The Rockingham cabinet proved too liberal for the friends of the king, and on August 2, 1766, it was dis-

solved. The new cabinet formed by his majesty's commands under the control of Mr. Pitt, who had just been created Earl of Chatham, caused a feeling of uncertainty among the colonists. The Earl of Chatham, the hope of the American people, proved to be not strong enough to save them.

The Duke of Grafton was placed at the head of the treasury, and Charles Townshend made chancellor of the exchequer. In May, 1767, the latter revived the scheme of taxing America, proposing to impose duties on glass, paper and tea, imported into the colonies.

The Earl of Chatham at that time being confined to his bed by sickness, the remaining friends of the colonies in parliament were not strong enough to prevent the passage of the bill through both houses, and it became a law.

The news of this measure, on reaching America, produced the greatest possible excitement. Counter measures were immediately proposed. Resort was had, as at a former day, to non-importation, the effect of which had been so severely felt by the traders in England under the Stamp Act.

As on the other occasion Hancock and Adams headed the opposition in Boston, boldly denouncing the act as tyrannical.

The fury with which Hancock had assailed the Stamp Act was mild in comparison to his boldness in denouncing the last measure. When we consider that he could have greatly added to his own wealth and power by espousing the cause of the crown, we can not doubt his



Death of the Earl of Chatham.

patriotism. He was present at the town meeting in October at which it was voted that measures should immediately be taken to promote the establishment of domestic manufactoryes, by encouraging the consumption of all articles of American manufacture. They furthermore agreed to purchase no articles of foreign growth or manufacture, but such as were absolutely indispensable.

New York and Philadelphia soon followed the example of Boston; and in a short time the merchants themselves entered into associations to import nothing from Great Britain, save such articles as were absolutely necessary.

Through all this commercial war, one may see the skillful management of Hancock, even though he was campaigning against his own financial interests. Being an importer, he knew that the most effective blow to strike at the mother country and the blow that would be most keenly felt, was at her commerce.

On the other hand his enemies may say that it was by the evasion of such laws that he made his profits. The evasion of the unjust law was popular at that time and in full accord with the ethics of most of the oppressed colonists.

It was the resistance of such tyrannical measures, at that time thought patriotic, that has caused Hancock to be stigmatized by some weak-writers as a smuggler. Often there are nice distinctions between patriots and outlaws, just as there are between fanaticism and sagacity.

If the patriots of the Revolution had failed in securing their own liberties, they would have been outlaws.

There can be no revolution or rebellion against law or government however tyrannical, without violation of law. On the other hand there has never been a rebellion against a perfect government. People who neither directly nor indirectly have any part in making laws that govern them, have more excuse for avoiding odious and offensive enactments, than those who possess the elective franchise.

If Hancock was an outlaw, his patriotism made him one, and no one can lay the charge of smuggling for gain at his door. He could easily have doubled his princely fortune by adhering to the oppressive course of the king; but his great generous heart was with his struggling countrymen and he resolved to cast his lot with them.

If the people are morally and legally makers of their own laws, Hancock and Adams never infringed on the code. The rules of foreign potentates across the ocean, they had come to feel were laws which, morally, they had no right to respect.

The year 1767 passed amid continual strife and agitation in the Colonies, especially in Boston, which was regarded by the British as the hot bed of sedition.

At the beginning of 1768, the American people educated by a long series of moral and political contests with the government of Great Britain, and assured by recent experience and observation of their own sound and potent physical and moral strength and the justice of their cause, stood in an attitude of firm resolve not to submit to the new schemes of the ministry for their enslavement.

Though determined to have home rule inviolate in their political affairs, yet they were willing to bear with patience the pressure upon their industrial enterprise of old acts of Parliament still unrepealed.

As yet Hancock was eminently loyal and proud of the honor of being a British subject in its broadest sense of nationality, as were his contemporary patriots. Nevertheless to the eye of the superficial observer, the Americans were at that time in a state of open revolt. Representative assemblies, representing the people, were defying the power of Great Britain which threatened to impose unjust and unconstitutional laws upon them with bullet and bayonet. The non-importation agreements, working disastrously against British commerce, were again in full force; and the spirit of resistance was ripe among the masses.

Hancock though a determined leader was more conservative than the masses. We have doubts however if the term leader is ever justly applied in any movement. In all great reforms and revolutions it is the masses who take the initiatory, and those who accompany and direct their cause are called leaders. The leaders are conservative men who "wait on judgment," for having reputations, and fortunes at stake, they naturally are more careful than the reckless masses with neither.

Hancock deprecating the spasmodic violence in opposition to the Stamp Act, counselled moderation, and condemned any but legal, just, and dignified measures. He saw that a crisis was at hand, when statesmanship of the highest order would be needed in the popular represen-

tative assemblies, and wise and judicious men were wanted as popular leaders of the people.

Without possessing the fiery eloquence of an Otis or Patrick Henry, or the deep statesman-like oratory of an Adams, Hancock was a fluent and scholarly speaker, with a manner and address that was pleasing and popular. Those who heard the smooth sentences rolling from his tongue were spell-bound, convicted and convinced by his earnest, impressive manner. But it was in deliberative assemblies that his power was most felt. In all the deliberations of the patriot leaders during that stormy period, the counsel of Hancock had great weight. He was bold but cautious, courteous but firm as a mountain, when an invasion of the rights of the poorest of the common people were at stake.

We can safely say that he went farther in the beginning than many other patriots dared venture. His expressions sometimes partook of the nature of defiance, and open rebellion, when others trembled at the thought.

One day a placard appeared on the Boston common, containing a call on the "Sons of Liberty," to "rise and fight for their rights," saying that legions would join them.

The above placard was denounced by James Otis as a rash, undignified and unlawful measure. John Dickinson deprecated anything like harsh measures with the mother country, and declared they must gain their liberties by constitutional methods.

But the affairs of men sometimes reach a point where law and constitution fail, and then revolutionary means

must be resorted to. When corrupt, unprincipled and tyrannical men seize the ship of state, and with it the courts, it is mockery to speak of constitutional methods.

Hancock knew this, and when appealed to answered evasively:

"Vox populi vox dei!" When the populace revolts we must follow. While we shall not lead the way to revolution, I apprehend that we are in danger of being driven to it."

At this time he was no more of a revolutionist than Otis and Dickinson, but his keen perceptive faculties no doubt enabled him to dip further into the future, and reason on what the outcome would be, than contemporaneous statesmen. At the opening of the assembly of Massachusetts at the beginning of 1768, the several obnoxious acts recently passed by Parliament were read and referred to a committee on the state of the province. That committee submitted a letter addressed to the agent of the colony in England, but intended for the ministry.

It set forth the rights of the Americans; their equality with British subjects as free citizens, and their right to local self-government.

It set forth loyalty and disclaimed a desire for independence; opposing the late acts merely on the grounds



John Dickinson.

of constitutionality; remonstrated against the maintaining of a standing army in America as expensive, useless, altogether inadequate to compel obedience, and dangerous to liberty.

It objected to the establishment in America of commissioners of customs, and many other measures which the members thought infringements on their liberties.

Hancock was no doubt consulted by Samuel Adams when he wrote his famous Circular Letter to the several colonial assemblies, informing them of the letter to the agent and the petition to the king, and inviting them to join the people of Massachusetts in "maintaining the liberties of America."

Hancock may have even suggested the famous epistle, for it is quite evident that he was among the very first, if not the first, to suggest a Continental Congress, the object of which was to resent if not resist the encroachments of Great Britain on the colonies.

This famous Circular Letter was laid before Governor Bernard, and excited his fears and indignation. He sent a copy with a personal letter expressing his views to the Earl of Hillsborough. That person received it about the middle of April, and sent instructions to the Governor to call upon the General Assembly of Massachusetts to rescind their resolutions, the substance of which was embodied in their circular, and in the event of refusal to dissolve them.

Meanwhile the most cheering responses had come to the Massachusetts Assembly from the colonies. About this time Hancock had been informed that General Gage

at New York had been ordered to hold a regiment of soldiers in readiness to send to Boston, to aid the crown officers in executing the laws. The admiralty was also directed to send a frigate and four smaller vessels of war to Boston harbor for the same purpose, with directions for repairing and occupying Castle William.

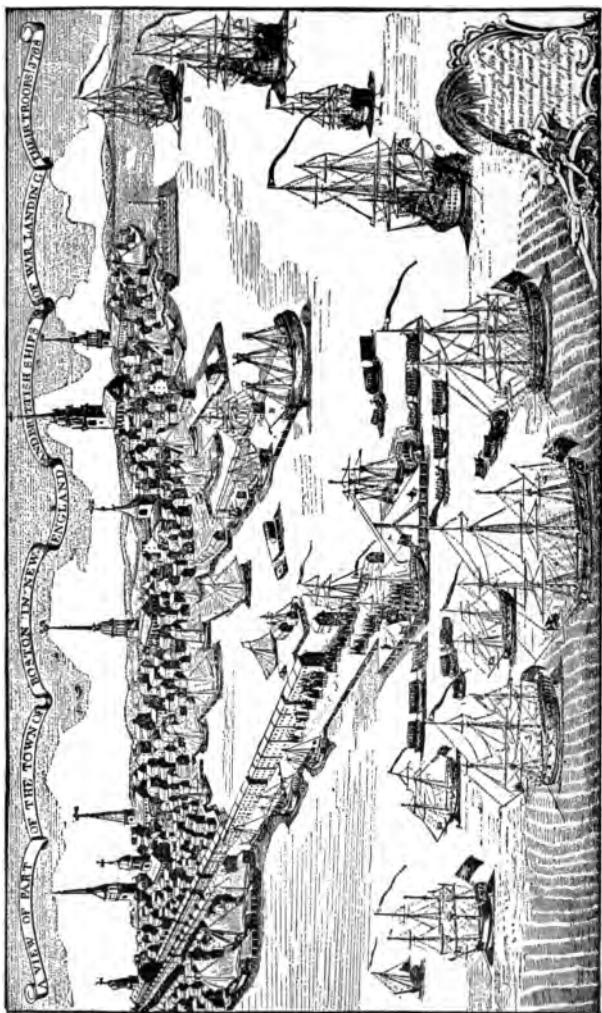
The tendency of the colonists to evade the pernicious revenue laws forced upon them, made this step seem important to the stubborn king. Mr. Lossing says the Americans regarded this measure as a virtual declaration of war, nevertheless wiser heads resolved to keep the sword of resistance in the scabbard as long as possible.

As John Hancock was much interested in the commerce of Boston, being the owner of several vessels, the extreme measures taken against that town, were intended as a punishment of him.

The commissioners of customs and commander of the sloop-of-war which, at their request, had come to Boston from Halifax, on their arrival assumed the utmost insolence of manner and speech toward the people. New England men were pressed into the British naval service, and treated worse than slaves.

There lived in Boston at this time a man named Malcolm, who had formerly been a sailor in Hancock's employ. Historians call him "a bold smuggler," and perhaps the charge was true, though there was no evidence that he engaged in smuggling while in Hancock's employ.

Hancock was an easy task master, and never was employer more liberal with employees. He paid good



Boston Harbor in 1768, from a Drawing Engraved and Printed by Paul Revere.
a. Long Wharf. b. Hancock's Wharf. c. North Battery. Landing of British Troops in the Foreground.

wages, rewarded merit, and won their love and confidence.

Malcolm was a brawling fellow, brave as a lion, and an ardent hater of despotism. He was continually engaged in quarrels and often in fights with the custom-house officers and soldiers. He had a numerous following among the "long-shoremen," many of whom were as eager as himself for a collision with the soldiers and officers of the crown, whom they had come to regard as their natural enemies.

In June, 1768, John Hancock's sloop, "*Liberty*," entered Boston harbor with a cargo of Madeira wine. The custom-house officers had grown to both hate and fear the owner, and were longing for an opportunity to injure him for his presumed insolence.

Just at sunset the "tide-waiter" under the commissioners went on board, and entering the cabin seated himself at the table to drink punch with the master, while the sailors landed the dutiable goods. This was the lax custom faithfully observed by the revenue officers.

Hancock had resolved to resist to the iniquitous revenue laws in every possible way. The whole country was resisting the oppression of their common enemy, and the reader must keep in mind the fact that his evading the law was not for personal gain.

"Those who purchased his goods duty free
Received the profit, and not he."

About nine o'clock in the evening, the captain of the "*Liberty*" and others, among whom was Malcolm, en-

tered the cabin, seized the "tide-waiter," confined him, and proceeded to land the wine without entering it at the custom-house, or observing any other formula proscribed by the crown officers. The master of the "*Liberty*" exerted himself so greatly in landing the cargo that he died from the effects, before morning.

Just as the last cask was landed, the sloop was seized by the officers of customs for violation of the revenue laws. The news of the seizure of the vessel spread like wild-fire through the town.

A crowd of citizens quickly gathered at the wharf, and as the proceedings went on, the lower order consisting of loafers, boys and negroes, became a mob under the leadership of Malcolm. The collector (Harrison) and controller (Hallowell) hurried to the dock to enforce the law. Mr. Harrison recommended that the sloop remain at Hancock's wharf with the broad arrow mark, to denote legal seizure; but Hallowell, who was both passionate and profane, swore she should not, and ordered her to be taken and moored under the guns of the British war-vessel "*Romney*."

He went aboard the "*Liberty*," and after a brief conversation with the tide-waiter came to the wharf and sent for the boats of the "*Romney*" to come and take the sloop away. An exciting scene followed, which Mr. Bancroft gives in the following graphic style:

"You had better let the vessel be at the wharf," said Malcolm.

"I shall not," said Hallowell, and gave directions to cut the fasts.

"Stop at least till the owner comes," said the people who crowded round.

"No," cried Hallowell, "cast her off."

"I'll split out the brains of any man who offers to receive a fast or stop a vessel," said the master of the "*Romney*," and he shouted to the marines to fire.

"What rascal is that who dares to tell the marines to fire?" cried a Bostoner; and turning to Harrison, the collector, a well meaning man, who disapproved the violent manner of the seizure, he added: "The owner is sent for; you had better let her lie at the wharf until he comes down."

"No, she shall go," insisted the controller; "show me the man who dares oppose it!"

"Kill the scoundrel," cried the master.

"We will throw the people of the '*Romney*' overboard," said Malcolm, stung with anger.

"She shall go," repeated the master, with a strong expletive, and he once more called on the marines, "why don't you fire?" and bade them fire.

So they cut her moorings, and with ropes on the barges, the sloop was towed away to the "*Romney*."

All the while the owner of the sloop seized by the marines and revenue officers, was at home unconscious of the great excitement caused by the seizure of his ship. When the messenger came to him with the information, he hastened to the wharf, but his vessel was already seized and being drawn up along side the "*Romney*."

The hot indignation of the people was aroused by the high handed act of Hallowell. A mob of whites and

negroes, followed the custom-house officers, pelted them with stones and other missiles, and broke the windows of their offices. A pleasure boat belonging to the collector was seized by some of the enraged mob, and after being dragged through the town was burned on the common.

The fires of rage having burned out, the exhausted mob dispersed and quietly returned to their homes. Though unhurt the commissioners were greatly alarmed. They applied to the Governor for protection, but he, as much frightened as they, plead that he was powerless to save them. They finally fled to the "*Romney*," and thence to Castle William, nearly three miles south-east of the city, where a company of British artillery was stationed.

Hancock deprecated the conduct of the mob, though he was the chief sufferer from the officers. Aided by Warren, Adams and Otis, he soon had the people under control so the collectors would really have been in no danger had they remained in their offices.

The above incident formed one of the pretexts on the part of the royal Governor for sending troops to Boston, an act that culminated in Lexington, Concord, Bunker Hill, the Revolution and Independence of the United States.

John Hancock, one of the most watchful and vigilant of all the liberty loving colonists, was at one moment the intended object of royal favor, and next of its vengeance. He was cool, unperturbed, and continued on in the even tenor of his way, always looking to the lib-

erties and interests of his countrymen more than to his own welfare.

Orders had been given General Gage, then at New York, to be in readiness to furnish troops whenever Bernard should make a requisition for them. When that officer heard of the disturbance in the New England capital, he sent word to the Governor that the troops were in readiness to march at a moment's notice.

Bernard was really anxious to send for them, for he was a revengeful man, but could not make the requisition without consent of his council, and that body perversely declared that the civil power did not need the support of soldiers, nor was it for his majesty's service or peace of the province that they should be required.

When the desires and acts of Bernard became known, it was with difficulty the indignation of the citizens of Boston could be restrained. Satisfied that sooner or later troops would be sent under some pretext, they resolved to put the engine of non-importation, which had worked so powerfully before, into vigorous operation.

During the month of August, 1768, nearly all the merchants of Boston subscribed to such a league, to go into operation on the first of January following, hoping, through the influence of the British merchants, to restrain the hand of the home government raised to strike them. The Sons of Liberty were everywhere active, watching every movement of the crown officers.

One day a British army officer was discovered on the streets of Boston, evidently making arrangements for barracks for the expected troops. The alarm was at

once given, and the city roused. A town meeting was called at the famous Faneuil Hall which appointed a committee, consisting of Hancock, Otis, John and Samuel Adams, to wait on the Governor and ascertain if the visit of the officer was for such a purpose, and to request him to call a special session of the legislature.

Bernard informed them that troops were about to be quartered in Boston, but declined to call the assembly until he should hear from home. The first part of the interview was stormy. Added to the defiant firmness of Hancock, was the fiery eloquence of Otis and the deep logic and statesmanship of Samuel Adams. They were calm but determined. Every word uttered was carefully weighed, and the Governor had good cause for alarm.

Four more powerful and popular men could not have been found in Boston. All Boston, which amounted to more than sixteen thousand souls, was behind them. The Governor who had set out to be firm gradually grew more pacific, and the interview which began stormy, had a mild termination.

Of all the committee the Governor knew Hancock was most to be feared. He possessed wealth, and money in those days was a power as it is at present. Besides he was popular among all classes. His great liberality, his love of justice, and above all his sympathy with the common people from the day laborer to the merchant, farmer and tradesman, made him their idol. He determined once more to placate him. Not being above offering bribes he attempted in a subtle form to beguile the staid true patriot who risked so much for the people

with a bribe, in the form of a commission as a member of his council.

If the Governor supposed that John Hancock was to be bought off with official honors, he was very much mistaken. The political purity of Hancock cannot be doubted even if his maligners should denounce him as a smuggler.

As any other just man would have been, he was righteously indignant at the attempt, and on receiving the commission tore it to pieces. Baffled in his efforts to secure Hancock the Governor determined to attempt the placation of other leaders. He offered the lucrative office of advocate general in the court of admiralty to John Adams, who instantly rejected it. He cautiously approached the sturdy Puritan, Samuel Adams, with honeyed words and an offer of place, but received such a rebuke that he never dared mention the subject to him again.

When it became evident that the Governor would not call the Assembly, a town meeting that was ordered, recommended that a convention of delegates from all the towns in the province be held in Boston, under the plausible pretext that the prevailing apprehensions of war with France required a general consultation; though apprehension of war with the mother country was the real cause for the movement.

The convention assembled September 22, 1768, with more than one hundred delegates, representing every town and district in the province, save one. Thomas Cushing, speaker of the Assembly, presided. They pe-

titioned the Governor to summon a general court; but he answered by denouncing the convention as a treasonable body. They disclaimed all pretensions to political authority, and professed the utmost loyalty to the king, and said they had met in that "dark and distressing time to consult and advise as to the best manner in preserving peace and good order."

The Governor had made a requisition on Gage for troops, who ordered them from Halifax to Boston. In daily expectation of their arrival he ordered the convention to disperse without delay; but those stern patriots unmoved by orders or threats, stood firm to their purpose and remained in session six days, but were careful to take no immoderate action.

They adopted a petition to the king, and an address to the people in which they set forth the alarming state of the country, advising abstainence from violence, and submission to legal authority.

The convention had just adjourned when the white sails of eight vessels of war appeared at the entrance to Boston Harbor, bearing the two regiments of British soldiers General Gage had ordered from Halifax, commanded by colonels Dalrymple and Carr.

In his zeal to carry out the wishes of the royal Governor, Gage sent his engineer, Montressor, to assist the troops if necessary. That officer bore an order in accordance with the wishes of Governor Bernard, to land troops in the settled parts of Boston. Accordingly on Saturday morning, October 1, 1768, the ships moved up to the city, anchored with springs on their cables; and

against the solemn protests of the people, the soldiers were landed at the Long Wharf, under cover of the guns of the war vessels.

After vainly trying to quarter the troops on the town,



Gray House, Pine Street, Boston. Built 1750. Used as a Hospital by the British.

the commanding officer was forced to pitch tents on the commons for them.

Thus backed up by the military the custom-house officers returned to Boston to resume their authority. One of their first acts was an attempt at revenge in the name of retributive justice. From the seizure of Hancock's vessel and the riots which resulted from it, the commissioners of customs had not dared venture from Castle

William under whose protecting guns they had sought shelter. But the arrival of soldiers and the sight of their snowy tents on Boston Common made them bold; they returned, more haughty and insolent than before.

It was only natural that the full fury of their vengeance should fall on Hancock. He and the "bold smuggler" Malcolm were arrested on false charges, claiming penalties for violations of acts of Parliament, which in Hancock's case amounted to almost half a million dollars. Hancock employed John Adams as his counsel, and that learned advocate said:

"A painful drudgery I had of his case and not a charge was established."

Shortly after the above incidents, the Earl of Chatham, that Englishman of honor and sterling worth, who was ever the friend of America, offended at the king's insolence, resigned, and Lord North was installed as leader of the British ministry. North was only the echo of the monarch, who swayed this minister with perfect control.

The king had made it an inflexible rule never to redress a grievance unless such redress was prayed for in a spirit of obedience and humility. He also determined to assert the right of Parliament to tax the colonies, and insisted that one tax must always be laid to keep up that right; so the king and his pliant minister clung to the duty on tea.

Hancock foresaw the inevitable drift of things. He was thoroughly conversant with the temper of the American people, not only in Massachusetts but in all the colonies,

When others still scouted at the idea of war he gravely shook his head and declared it must come. He knew that the citizens of Boston could not much longer endure the growing insolence of the king's soldiers.

Instead of being thoroughly disciplined obedient troops, the soldiery seemed a horde of ruffians who emulated with each other in the perpetration of outrage and insult on the citizens. That the officers were not only cognizant of their conduct but encouraged it, there can be no question.

From the landing of the soldiers to March 5, 1770, there seemed to be an inevitable drift to one condition, and an approach of the terrible climax.

What is known as the Boston Massacre, began at the shop of a rope-maker, where a British soldier in a boxing match with some of the workmen got worsted, and going to the barracks returned with a sufficient number of his dissolute comrades to chase all the rope-makers through the streets.

The citizens naturally sympathized with the rope-makers, and that afternoon began to gather in large numbers to avenge the wrongs of the workmen. But the civil and military authorities took steps to at least postpone a collision. The trouble with the rope-makers occurred on Friday, March 2, and there was no more outbreak until the evening of Monday, March 5th.

The ground was covered with a thin coating of snow, and the moon but dimly illuminated the scene when the citizens and soldiers, as if impelled by acts of vengeance, began to assemble on the streets. Taunts and jeers from

side to side became the order of the day. Had the commander of the troops been as desirous of preventing a quarrel as he pretended, he would have kept the troops in their barracks, instead of permitting them to roam the streets and stir up quarrels. By seven o'clock a large mob, armed with stones and clubs, were on King, now State street, shouting to the lawless soldiers:

"Let us drive out these rascals! They have no business here—drive them out!"

Bands of soldiers were roaming about the streets boasting of their valor, cursing Hancock and Adams, and threatening them and their friends with the most dire vengeance.

At last unable to longer endure their taunts, the people assailed them and drove them about the town, until Captain Preston, the officer of the day, sent eight armed men to help a soldier whom the mob was threatening. There was a collision, the soldiers fired, and three of the populace were killed and two mortally wounded.

Preston and his soldiers were arrested and tried on the charge of murder; they were defended by John Adams, and acquitted.

Hancock was shocked by the Boston massacre. He knew that technically and legally the mob was to blame, for they had acted in a lawless manner, but back of it all he saw the righteous indignation which had incited them to riot, and realized that this effusion of blood would not be the end.

He was at the town gathering in the Old South Meeting-House, then the largest building in the city, where

a resolution was offered "that nothing could be expected to restore peace and prevent carnage, but an immediate removal of the troops." He was also one of the committee of fifteen of which Samuel Adams was chairman that carried the resolution to Hutchinson and Dalrymple. This committee driven to desperation, became bold, and Adams addressing the governor said:

"The people are determined to remove the troops out of town by force if they will not go voluntarily. They are not such people as formerly pulled down your house, that conduct these measures, but men of estates, men of religion. The people will come into us from all the neighboring towns; we shall have ten thousand men at our backs, and your troops will probably be destroyed by the people, be it called rebellion or what it may."

Hutchinson answered:

"An attack on the Kings troops would be high treason, and every man concerned in it would forfeit his life and estate."

But after much parleying he promised to withdraw one regiment from the city. This, however did not placate the enraged Americans, and Hancock was chosen on another committee representing the citizens of Boston to carry a resolution from the town meeting informing Hutchinson that it was "the unanimous opinion of the meeting, that the reply made to the vote of the inhabitants, presented to his honor this morning, is by no means satisfactory, and that nothing else will satisfy them but a total and immediate removal of all the troops."

The committee informed Hutchinson that there must be no more trifling with the will of the people.

After a hasty conference between Hutchinson and Dalrymple it was decided to send the troops to Castle William. The committee returned to the meeting with the good news, and the old South Meeting-House rang with acclamations of joy. The troops were sent out of town as soon as it could be done, and the "Sons of Liberty" thus scored another victory.

The crown officers continued to incite the colonists to resistance by their continual tantalizing conduct; displaying both a hatred and weakness which only tended to increase the boldness of the Americans.

The burning of the "*Gaspe*" June 9, 1772, prompted by the insolence of her commander was only one of many daring and lawless deeds of the time. It seemed that the most tyrannical and over-bearing officers were placed over the colonists to excite them to greater rage.

Considering the timidity of wealthy men of the present, one might think Hancock, though a patriot, would have been more conservative for the sake of his property. He was in greater peril than any other, for he was more easily injured. His wealth consisted of houses and land in the city of Boston as well as his ships on the seas, all of easy access to the crown.

But Hancock was no "latter-day patriot," and neither danger to his person nor fortune intimidated him. He was not even what one would call conservative, for he "advocated armed resistance to oppression, even when Otis, the Adamses, and others were depending on the law

and constitution. "Of what avail is law and constitution when administered by tyrants who violate it themselves?" argued Hancock.

This was dangerous doctrine at a time when a single spark might set the whole magazine aflame. Of all the patriots of his day, he was one of the most daring. He was at most of the town-meetings, served on dangerous committees, and whether addressing the mob on the street, or members of the Colonial assembly, his language was bold, courageous, but marked with dignity and erudition.

He faced the inevitable and accepted the issue as from the hand of fate. At the funeral of the victims of the Boston massacre, he delivered an address, so glowing and fearless in its reprobation of the conduct of the soldiery and their leaders, as to greatly offend the governor.

The year 1773 marked another era in the trouble between Great Britain and her Colonies. The determination to force tea upon them culminated in another riot, but one without blood-shed.

Early on Monday morning, November 29, 1773, hand bills were scattered all over Boston containing the following,

"Friends! Bretheren! Countrymen! That worst of plagues, the detested tea, shipped for this port by the East India Company, is now arrived in the harbor; the hour of destruction, or manly opposition to the machinations of tyranny, stares you in the face; every friend to his country, to himself and posterity is now called upon to meet at Faneuil Hall, at nine o'clock, this day, at

which time the bells will ring, to make united and successful resistance to this last, worst, and most destructive measure of administration."

The subject of this sketch may have been the author



"Tea Party" House, Tremont Street, Boston. Built 1735.
(Copyright by W. A. French.)

of the above call. At any rate he was at the meeting in Faneuil Hall, which proving too small, they adjourned to the famous old South Meeting-House, where the people resolved that the tea should not be landed.

The meeting "moved the captain of the '*Dartmouth*' not to attempt to land the tea." A number of post riders were appointed to carry the news to other towns, in case there should be an attempt to land by force.

The consignees offered to store the tea until they could hear from England; but the Bostonians were determined. "Not a pound shall be landed," was their declaration.

On the 14th of December it was resolved to order Mr. Rotch to immediately apply for a clearance for his ship, and send her to sea, as all his cargo had been landed except the tea.

In the meantime the stubborn Governor had determined the ship should not leave the harbor before the tea was landed, and took measures to prevent her sailing until he had forced the obnoxious article on the people of Boston.

He wrote to the ministry, advising the prosecution of some of the Sons of Liberty in Boston, for high crimes and misdemeanors. He ordered Admiral Montague to place two armed ships at the entrance to Boston Harbor to prevent the egress of vessels; and directed Colonel Leslie, who was in command at the Castle, not to allow any vessel to pass out from the range of his great guns, without a permit signed by himself.

Mr. Rotch was refused clearance from the custom-house officers, and appealed to the Governor, but was again refused a clearance, until he landed the tea. The people said it should not be landed, and the Governor determined to force it upon them. The great old South Meeting-House was crowded to its utmost.

Josiah Quincy, a young lawyer feeble in body, but a giant in intellect, delivered a stirring address to the people. He spoke until after sunset, and candles were

lighted, and concluded just before Mr. Rotch returned with the information that the Governor had peremptorily refused him permission to send his vessel to sea, before the tea was landed.

A murmur ran over the vast assembly, which was hushed when Samuel Adams rose to his feet. His speech was not long, but it was significant. It bid farewell to peaceful and lawful measures and threw the people upon themselves for recourse. In an even clear voice he said:

“This meeting can do no more to save the country.”

At that moment a person painted and dressed like a Mohawk Indian gave a war-whoop in the gallery, which was responded to in kind at the door. Another voice in the gallery shouted:

“Boston Harbor a teapot to-night! Hurrah for Griffin’s wharf.”

The meeting adjourned, and the people hurried in a throng to the wharf, following a number of men disguised as Indians. The populace cheered. Guards were posted to keep order, and among them was Hancock, whom nothing seemed to daunt. He took no pains to conceal his identity, and while he took no part in the destruction of the tea, he aided in keeping the great throng of onlookers quiet while the deed was done, preventing any further rioting.

About fifty-nine young men, most of whom were disguised as Indians, though some were not disguised at all, went on board the tea-ships, and in the course of three hours, emptied three hundred and forty-two chests

of tea into the harbor. Events seemed to rush on the heels of each other, so swiftly did they come about. The destruction of the tea in Boston Harbor only widened the breach between Great Britain and her colonies.

1774 was an auspicious year not only in Hancock's life but in the history of the American people. He was made a member of the committee on correspondence, and was kept busy night and day, preparing the people of the province for energetic action. The importance of these committees may be understood by the estimate placed on them by a Tory who wrote of them:

"This is the foulest, subtlest, and most venomous serpent ever issued from the egg of sedition. *It is the source of rebellion.* * * *

Hutchinson was supplanted by General Gage, who sent four additional regiments to Boston. About this time the Boston Port Bill became known to the people of the city.

While Gage was being dined by the magistrates and others on his arrival in Boston May 13, 1774, the enraged populace were burning his predecessor in effigy on the broad common in front of John Hancock's house.

Gage came to Boston fully warned of Hancock, and prepared to take the most extreme measures against him and Adams. Not only had Hancock been the most active of the committee of correspondence, but had urged a general congress, which measure caused the crown grave apprehensions.

The circular letter explained why Massachusetts had been under the necessity of proceeding to extreme meas-

ures, and entreated for future guidance the benefit of the councils of the whole country.

On March 5, 1774, Hancock spoke to a large audience in Boston with his usual logic and boldness. In the course of his speech he said:

"Permit me to suggest a general Congress of deputies from the several houses of assembly on the continent, as the most effectual method of establishing a union for the security of our rights and liberties. Remember from whom you sprang. Not only pray, but act; if necessary fight and even die for the prosperity of our New Jerusalem."

To General Gage, with his ideas of the divine rights of kings and royalists, this speech breathed treason of the darkest hue. The British ministry put great reliance in the military ability of Gage to over-awe the rebellious subjects of Massachusetts.

Almost the first act of the Governor was to make Hancock the object of his official displeasure. In less than three months after his arrival he revoked his commission in the Boston cadets, and that company resented the insult by returning the king's standard and disbanding.

Alarmed at the rebellious spirit manifested by the colonists, Gage removed the seat of government from Salem back to Boston, and began to fortify the Neck. Some of the troops further aggravated matters by seizing a quantity of gunpowder at Charleston and Cambridge which belonged to the province.

A convention was held September 6, 1774, at which

it was resolved that no obedience was due to any part of the late acts of Parliament. On the day before the meeting of the convention, the General Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, and the information of the firm course it took, greatly strengthened the cause of liberty in Massachusetts. The patriots of Boston began to assume a bolder tone.

Gage summoned the House of Representatives to meet at Salem, to proceed to business, according to the new order of things under the late acts of Parliament.

Town meetings were held, but so revolutionary were their proceedings, that Gage countermanded his order for the assembly. His right to countermand was denied, and most of the members elect, to the number of ninety, met at Salem. On the day of appointment, of course Gage was not there, and as nobody appeared to open the court, or administer the oaths, they resolved themselves into a provincial Congress and adjourned to Concord. By this act Massachusetts had really set up an independent government in opposition to the king.

At Concord they organized by choosing John Hancock president, and Benjamin Lincoln, afterwards a general in the Revolutionary army, secretary. Mr. Hancock presided with that dignity and wisdom over the deliberations of the provincial Congress which the grave conditions of their country required. Practically in open rebellion against his king the presiding officer realized his position, and though his conduct was marked with caution, there was no vacillation, hesitation, or weakness in any of his actions.

The denunciations of Gage had no other effect than to increase the zeal of the patriots. The provincial Congress proceeded to appoint a Committee of Safety at the head of which was Hancock, giving this committee the power to call out the militia.

A committee was appointed to provide communication



Wright Tavern, Concord, Mass. Built 1747.

and stores, and the sum of sixty thousand dollars was appropriated for that purpose. Provisions were also made for arming the people of the province.

Henry Gardner was appointed treasurer of the colony under the title of Receiver General, into whose hands the constables and tax-collectors were directed to pay all

public moneys which they received. Jedediah Preble, Artemas Ward, and Seth Pomeroy were appointed officers of the militia; though Ward and Pomeroy alone entered upon the duty of organizing the military. Ammunition and stores were speedily collected at Concord, Woburn and other places. Mills were erected for making gunpowder; manufactories were set up for making arms, and great encouragement given for the production of saltpeter.

The provincial Congress disavowed any intention of attacking the British soldiers, and only claimed to be preparing for their own defence, yet they took measures to cut off their supplies from the country.

Governor Gage issued a proclamation denouncing their proceedings, but it did not disturb the equilibrium of the members who, under the guidance and leadership of their able president, went steadily on with their business. As the acts of the provincial Congress had all the authority of law, the Governor was unsupported save by his troops and a few officials and their friends in the city.

On the 23d of November the provincial Congress voted to enroll twelve thousand militia, to be drilled and ready at a moment's notice to take the field. These were called Minute Men.

The influence of John Hancock and Samuel Adams was felt outside of their own colony; for they extended invitations to Rhode Island and Connecticut to follow their example. The Massachusetts Provincial Congress elected delegates to the general Congress which was to

meet again in May, 1775. Two new generals were appointed for the minute men, Generals Thomas and Heath, and it then adjourned to meet early in 1775.

Gage very naturally looked upon the whole proceeding as decidedly revolutionary, and regarded Hancock and Adams as the chief instigators of the rebellion.

He prepared for extreme measures, but long months rolled by before open hostilities began. The more conservative of the patriots hoped that revolution and the consequent war which would follow, might be averted. While they began to realize the probability of a new nation, even Hancock shuddered at the thought of the long bloody war that must follow a severance from the mother country.

The Boston Port Bill, which was a direct blow at Hancock's commercial business, ruined it, and paralyzed every other business in which he was engaged. Yet he was of a sanguine temperament, ever cheerful, and never doubted the ultimate result of the great struggle for liberty.

If the king did not give the Americans liberty they would take it, he argued.

He was not mistaken in the men on whose valor and powers of endurance he relied. Many of them had already seen service in the long Indian wars in which they had engaged, and won honors on bloody fields. The younger men who were to fight the battles of the revolution, were sons of battle scarred veterans, and accustomed to fire-arms from early boyhood.

All that long winter during 1774 and 1775 the gun-

smiths were kept busy, turning out arms destined to do effective service. The minute men were mustered regularly for drill and discipline. Often during the winter the cowshed and even the village church became their drilling halls. The good pastors caught the fires of liberty and from their pulpits poured forth their patriotic



Old Butler House, Quincy, Mass. Home of Dorothy Quincy.

souls, making strong the weakest arm.

All Massachusetts, in fact all North America, had caught the inspiration from the little band of patriots in Massachusetts.

But there is one incident in Hancock's life which partakes of romance. In his case Cupid went hand in hand with Mars.

He was still a young man, still unmarried, but his

heart had been stirred by tenderer emotions than politics and war. The soft eyes of Dorothy Quincy, one of the fairest maids of all New England had won the affections of this stern patriot, brave soldier, orator and statesman. Even his pressing duties, the distant thunder of approaching war with all the rush of preparation did not prevent him from occasionally stealing away from the turmoil, vexation, and annoyance of public duties to spend a pleasant hour in her society.

Dorothy was as patriotic as her lover, and aided him with her valuable counsel, giving him such encouragement as only a pure, noble woman can. Being an ardent lover of liberty, her sympathies went out to the oppressed and struggling colonies.

Early in 1775 it became rumored that Governor Gage desired to get Hancock and Samuel Adams in his power, but their constant vigilance proved more than a match for his strategy.

Hancock had a host of fast friends in Boston as well as in other places in New England, who kept him posted of the governors designs, so that he continually thwarted him. Among the friends of the patriot was Paul Revere whose famous ride to Lexington has formed the theme of patriotic song and story, for more than a hundred years.

Boston was no longer safe for either Hancock or Samuel Adams, and they spent most of the late winter and early spring at Concord, or in other parts of the colony, when the Congress was not in session, encouraging the minute men, looking after supplies and arms, and pre-

paring for the final clash of arms when the time should come.

The Continental Congress had petitioned to Parliament for redress of their wrongs, but their petition was treated with contempt, and the people were left without redress.

The first effort of the military to subdue the colonists was at Salem, the object of which was to seize some old cannon at that place. The British troops arrived on Sunday when the people were at church. On learning of their approach, the congregation was dismissed, and led by Colonel Timothy Pickering, they met the Britons at the drawbridge, and the red-coats retired without a shot being exchanged.

Though this first encounter was bloodless, Hancock declared it was only the precursor of sanguinary conflicts soon to follow. The air was full of revolutionary utterances and thought, and it seemed as if the lightning of popular wrath was about to kindle a mighty conflagration.

On both sides watchful eyes never slept, and watchful ears were always open to catch any utterance that might fall from the lips of a foe. All through March and far into April, Boston was like a seething cauldron of intense feeling.

Gage, the stern soldier, who was supposed to have an iron will, proved a failure, and became irresolute and timid. Under his command were four thousand well armed, equipped and disciplined soldiers, competently officered, and yet for a long time he hesitated. He de-

pended too long on the presence of his armed hosts to overawe the colonists, who instead of being frightened grew bolder and stronger every day.

At last he determined to "nip the rebellion in the bud," by seizing Hancock and Adams and sending them to England on the charge of treason. As Hancock and Adams were still at Concord, he decided that the expedition sent to capture them would also seize the munitions of war, which he had been informed were stored at the latter place. His brilliant *coup d'etat* was to be kept a profound secret until the last moment.

The Provincial Congress at Concord adjourned April 15th, and Hancock and Adams started back to Boston. Their movements were slow and marked with extreme caution, for it had been reported that parties of troops were making incursions into the country.

Being mounted on fleet horses they had little fears of being caught in a fair chase; but as the treacherous enemy were not above kidnapping, or assassination, they had to exercise the greatest possible care.

They had almost reached Lexington when they discovered a horseman speeding toward them like the wind. They drew rein and waited for him to approach near enough to be recognized. He proved to be a friend from Boston with the information that a loyal lady in that city whose husband was a Tory had, by an intercepted letter from London, learned that Gage was determined to arrest both Hancock and Adams and send them to England for trial on charge of treason. This messenger also brought information from the same source that

troops would in a few days, perhaps a few hours, be sent to Concord to apprehend them.

On this intelligence their friends in Boston had advised all to move their plate and valuables, and the Committee of Safety had voted that all the ammunition be deposited in nine different towns.

Hancock and Adams were only a mile from Lexington when they received this alarming intelligence, and they held a brief discussion on the situation, then rode slowly to the village.

It was prudence and not cowardice which made them heed the warning. Both of these heroes had proven their courage on more than a score of occasions, when they had defied the haughty officers of a foolish king to their faces.

On their arrival at Lexington they found the little village, so soon to be drenched with blood, wild with excitement. Their friends gathered about them and in alarm entreated them to remain at the village, until they could learn what course of action the British Governor and his detestable soldiers intended pursuing.

Hancock was easily persuaded to remain in Lexington, not so much from any fear of the king's soldiers in Boston as a peculiarly strong attraction in the village.

When it was whispered in the ear of the gallant patriot that the fair Dorothy Quincy was a guest at the home of the Reverend Jonas Clark, the battle was won so far as detaining him was concerned.

The good pastor, Mr. Clark, invited both the statesmen to become his guests, where they were warmly

welcomed and every needful precaution taken by the good people of Lexington to guard them against surprise and capture. Hancock and Adams both supposed that if Governor Gage really designed to capture them,



Hancock or Clark House, Lexington, Mass.
Residence of Rev. John Hancock for 55 years, and of Rev. Jonas Clark for 50 years. John Hancock and Samuel Adams were sleeping here when aroused by Paul Revere.

- he would only send a small company of light dragoons to accomplish the purpose.

There has been much dispute in regard to the chief design of Governor Gage in sending the troops under Smith and Pitcairn to Lexington and Concord. While many good authorities affirm his main intention was to seize the military stores at Concord, at the same time no

one doubts that he hoped to also effect the capture of Hancock and Adams. Perhaps he had both ends in view. In order to accomplish his purpose, the soldiers who were to do the work, were to leave Boston secretly in the evening, at a time that would enable them to reach Lexington at an hour past midnight, while the doomed patriots slept.

It was the design of the troops after capturing them to move rapidly on to Concord which was only six miles further, and seize or destroy the cannon and military stores which the patriots had succeeded in gathering there.

Preparations for this expedition began the very day the Provincial Congress adjourned. On that day eight hundred grenadiers and infantry were detached from the main body and marched to a different part of the town, under pretense of teaching them some new military movements. The transport boats which had been hauled up for repairs, were launched at night and moored under the stern of the man of war.

Dr. Warren, one of the most watchful of the patriots, sent notice to Hancock of these suspicious movements, who being chairman of the Committee of Safety, before leaving Concord, had caused the principal part of the stores at that village to be removed to a more secure place.

To prevent a knowledge of his intended expedition spreading into the country, Gage sent out a number of his officers to post themselves along the several roads leading to and from Boston. In order to more effectu-

ally succeed and allay suspicion these officers were sent out one at a time.

The Sons of Liberty were watchful, however, and one of them discovering so many strangers on the road suspected that their design was the capture of Hancock and Adams, and hastening to Lexington informed Colonel Monroe, then sergeant of a military company. That officer, supposing the effort would be made by a small party with the intention to kidnap the two patriots, collected a guard of eight well-armed men to protect the house of Reverend Jonas Clark, on that memorable night of the eighteenth.

The interest the people took in the security and welfare of the great advocates of Liberty is indicative of the interest they had in the cause. Every man in Lexington seemed willing if necessary to shed his blood for Hancock and Adams.

The village of Lexington which, at that time, according to Mr. Bancroft, may have had seven hundred inhabitants, was in a fever of excitement, when the day closed.

Captain Parker had notified the minute men of the expected advance of the enemy, and about seventy of his company reported at roll call. They were told to hold themselves in readiness and fall in line at the first tap of the drum, and defend their liberties with their lives.

The sun set and left all quiet in Lexington, though there was a feverish state of excitement even in the silence. Men stood about in little groups with pale faces but firm lips. Occasionally there was a whispered con-

ference in the shadow of some building, or under the spreading branches of some large tree.

The wives and daughters of the patriots of the village seemed to feel that inexpressible emotion of awe which follows the sure conclusion that something terrible will happen in a short time. Mothers hurriedly put their children to bed and fell on their knees in prayer.

All felt the hour had come, when blood must be shed or the chains of slavery forever forged.

No one thought of retreat or surrender at that moment, but being children of peace, rather than discord they would have much preferred to avoid a conflict if they could without sacrifice of their liberty.

The eight minute men detailed to guard the home of Mr. Clark, in which slept Hancock and Adams, silently took their position, and an armed sentry began pacing his beat before the door.

Hancock remained up late that evening, conversing with Dorothy Quincy. Fully realizing the gravity of the situation, their conversation was more serious than usual for lovers.

Even then, unknown to him and his betrothed, a great body of men was moving with steady tread toward the village. No doubt each felt impressed that the crisis which had so long been approaching was close at hand, and they would shortly be called to face the terrible realities of war.

When they separated that night to retire, they fully understood each other. Dorothy insisted that she would accompany him and share his danger wherever he went.

As the hours went by, one by one the inmates retired and the candles were extinguished. Only the ticking of the great clock in the hall and the slow measured tread of the sentry broke the silence. Light fleecy clouds floated beneath the sky, and the moon gave fitful



Old Belfry, Lexington, Mass. Erected 1761.
In this belfry was hung the bell which rung out the alarm of the approach of
the British Troops, April 19th, 1775.

gleams of light. At one moment it shed a flood of silver on the quiet village, and at the next coyly withdrew behind a cloud as if ashamed of its boldness.

The sentry with his musket on his shoulder drowsily paced his beat, occasionally halting to yawn and wish himself at home in bed.

A little past midnight the loud clatter of horse's hoofs coming down the hard beaten road from the direction of the city, fell on the ear of the drowsy sentry. He paused in his beat, started in surprise, and rubbing his eyes was half inclined to believe he was dreaming. No, there it came again nearer and more distinct, and the next moment he saw a horseman mounted on a foaming steed galloping toward the house.

"Halt!" cried the sentry. His challenge at once brought Sergeant Monroe to his side.

The horseman paid no heed to the challenge, but thundered up to the house and in a voice which betrayed deepest anxiety, asked:

"Where is Mr. Hancock?"

Sergeant Monroe, anxious that the rest of the family should not be broken, answered:

"The family have retired, and I am directed not to let them be disturbed by any noise."

"Noise!" exclaimed the horseman, who was none other than Paul Revere, "You will have noise enough before long; the regulars are coming out. I am going to knock on the door and warn Mr. Hancock before he is surrounded."

Mr. Clark, who had just retired but was not asleep, opened the door and asked:

"Who is there?"

"I want to see Mr. Hancock," Revere hurriedly answered.

Mr. Clark not being acquainted with Paul Revere, hesitated a moment and said:

"I do not like to admit strangers into my house so late at night."

Mr. Hancock, who was still awake, recognized the voice of the messenger without as his friend, and throwing open a window called out:

"Come in, Revere; we are not afraid of *you*."

Paul leaped from his jaded steed and hurried into the house, where he was almost immediately surrounded by Mr. Jonas Clark and his guests, listening with breathless eagerness to the strange wild story which the horseman had to tell. For the first time he told how he had been warned by the signal lights from the old belfry, of the advance of the British. His own thrilling adventures familiar to every school boy caused a thrill of mingled interest and alarm in his eager listeners.

Throughout that thrilling recital, Hancock was perhaps the most cool and unconcerned, though he knew he was a special object for the Governor's wrath. A very serious question arose in the minds of all. What were the two men who were the heads of the Provincial Government to do?

The good parson at once began to urge them to retire to some place of safety, but both were opposed to such an act of cowardice. Hancock argued that their lives were no more precious than the lives of the minute men who, under the brave Captain Parker, at that moment were mustering on the green, for it was now two o'clock in the morning.

It was nearly daylight, when through the persuasion and appeals of Miss Quincy, Hancock agreed to retire

with Mr. Adams to Woburn. Dorothy Quincy accompanied her lover and his companion from Lexington.

It was already growing light in the east, when the sound of fife and drum on the distant road caused them



Line of the Minute Men, Lexington, Mass. Harrington House
in the Background.

to halt for a few moments on an eminence to give one last glance at that handful of brave men, drawn up on the green under Captain Parker, to shed their blood in the cause of freedom. How brave, how silent those martyrs stood.

Only for a moment did they gaze on them, then resumed their flight, and the hills and trees just concealed

Lexington common and the brave defenders, when those distant shots "which were heard 'round the world" broke on the shuddering air.

"Oh God! They have fired on our people!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"It is done," said Hancock calmly.

The die was cast. The war had begun, and Hancock's heart and soul was in his country's cause.

Though Hancock took no immediate part in the field, for his talents were needed in other directions, yet his heart was with the brave men who were spilling their blood for the liberties of future generations.

Boston became the chief point of military interest. The Governor had received large reinforcements from England under Generals Howe, Burgoyne and Clinton, which made Boston the first point on which the Provincial Congress recommended the council of war to concentrate their forces.

Gage proclaimed martial law throughout Massachusetts; but offered a pardon to all rebels who would return to their allegiance, with two conspicuous exceptions, John Hancock and Samuel Adams. These two exceptions were made with the discrimination that, "Their offences are of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment." This virulent proscription, made after efforts to corrupt them with gold and power, though intended for their ruin, widely extended their fame.

Hancock was a member of the Continental Congress which met at Philadelphia May 10th, beyond the reach

of Governor Gage. On the 24th of that month, the chair of the president becoming vacant by the departure of Peyton Randolph, Mr. Hancock was elected by a unanimous vote to fill it.

Mr. Harrison of Virginia had all along been classed as



Monument and Concord Bridge, with Statue of Minute Man in the Background,
Concord, Mass.

among the conservative members, but as he conducted Mr. Hancock to the chair, he said:

“We will now show Great Britain how much we value her proscriptions.”

Gage thought the election of Hancock to the Presidency of the Continental Congress a personal affront; but whether it was so intended or not, a more fitting

official could not have been selected. In that office he put forth some of his most valuable labors. The same dignity, clear sightedness and courage, which had characterized his career, was marked during his term as president.

But sudden honors, trying scenes, war and wrangling statesmen, did not for a moment stifle the tender flame of love in Hancock's breast. On the 28th day of August, 1775, he stole away for a day to Fairfield, Connecticut, and was married to Dorothy Quincy, who had shared his dangers in the flight on that dismal morn from Lexington.

Hancock is known mainly by his public life, but he was a kind and indulgent husband, and ever the hero of his devoted wife. He was domestic, though his public duties robbed him of much home enjoyment. But one child, a son, was born of this union, who died at an early age.

The Continental Congress soon found itself burdened with the question of a continental army. Each colony so far had been fighting the trained armies of Great Britain alone, and some sort of a united effort became a necessity.

The President of the Congress being one among the first to urge a general Congress of all the colonies, was also one among the first to urge an army. When provisions had been made for an army, then followed a discussion on the subject of a commander-in-chief.

Colonel George Washington, from Virginia, a modest, quiet, yet thoughtful man, had been a member of the Continental Congress since its first session.

On June 14th John Adams, in a brief speech, delineated the qualities which he deemed essential in the man they were to choose commander, and announced his intention to propose for that office a delegate from Virginia sitting in the house. All knew to whom Mr. Ad-



Washington Elm, Cambridge, Mass. Under this tree Washington took command of the American army.

ams referred, and on the following day, Thomas Johnson, of Maryland, nominated Colonel Washington, who was elected by acclamation.

The battle of Bunker Hill had been fought, and the colonists were already besieging Boston. Washington hastened to the beleagured city, and under the old elm

at Cambridge, assumed command of the Continental army, while Hancock remained at Philadelphia as President of the Continental Congress.

He wrote to Washington expressing a wish to serve under him, but it was apparent to all that brave as he was, Hancock was better fitted for a statesman than soldier.

The disinterestedness of the President of the Continental Congress was never more clearly shown than during the siege of Boston. Soon after Washington assumed command of the army, the question of bombarding that city presented itself to the commander-in-chief, and he wrote to Congress in regard to the propriety of such a course. Hancock, perhaps, was more deeply interested in Boston than any other person, as nearly all his property at this time consisted of houses and real estate in the city.

On motion Congress went into a committee of the whole to enable Mr. Hancock to express his opinion. A member was temporarily called to the chair, and the patriot took his place on the floor to address the chairman.

His speech was filled with eloquence, patriotism and self-sacrifice, concluding with the following forcible expression:

“It is true, sir, that nearly all I have in the world is in the town of Boston, but if the expulsion of the British troops and the liberty of my country demand that they be burned to ashes, issue the order, *and let the cannon blaze away!*”

In forwarding the resolve to Washington, Hancock announced it as having been adopted after a long and serious debate, and added:

"May God crown your attempt with success. I most heartily wish it, though individually I may be the greatest sufferer."



Holmes House, Cambridge, Mass. Built 1725.
Headquarters of American officers during the Siege of Boston. The Battle of Bunker Hill was planned here. This was also the birthplace of Oliver Wendell Holmes. (Copyright, 1894, by W. A. French.)

In February, 1776, Hancock, though still president of the Continental Congress, was appointed by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts one of the Major Generals of militia of that colony.

The signing of the Declaration of Independence is an old story known to every schoolboy; but John Hancock is so closely associated with that event that to avoid a

brief mention of it would be to slight the most important part of his biography.

The average reader knows but little of this great man, save that he was first to sign the declaration, and his is the most striking and beautiful chirography of all those brave men who appended their names to the immortal document.

Hancock occupying the chair of president heard the great speeches for and against the measure, while his soul thrilled with the enthusiasm of freedom. His anxiety had reached its utmost bounds, when on the Fourth of July, 1776, the thirteen colonies by a unanimous vote declared themselves Free and Independent States.


Chair used by Hancock
while President of the
Continental Congress.
Carpenter's Hall.

While old Liberty Bell was ringing out the glad tidings, and the assembled thousands about the State House were shouting themselves hoarse with joy, John Hancock, remembering that he had been proscribed, dipped his pen in the ink, and affixing that immortal signature to the document which made his country free, exclaimed:

“There ! John Bull can read that without spectacles. Now let him double his reward.”

The heroism that inspired Luther to go to Worms “though a devil sat on every housetop,” inspired the heart of the patriot to act with a boldness that stunned the old world. To free his country was his life work, and he did it with a stroke of his pen.

On the day of its adoption, the Declaration of Independence was signed by John Hancock and the Secretary only, and thus it went forth to the world. It was several months before all the names which now appear to the document, were appended.

Hancock's wisdom and sagacity during his term as president, while it at times brought down the censure of some of his friends at home, no doubt saved the States from internecine quarrels that might have cost them their independence.

Some of the injudicious New Englanders desired with the Declaration of Independence, to precipitate the emancipation of slavery. The President of the Continental Congress knew full well that such a measure was unwise, as it would divide the states at a time when they most needed the united strength of the whole country. So bitter was the feeling engendered against Hancock by some of the narrow men of the North, that when Congress came to tender a vote of thanks for his services, some of the northernmost States voted in the negative, while the South gave him a solid vote, and were always his best friends.

"It is unwise, it is foolish to engage in internal quarrels when we have a common cause at stake!" Hancock declared when rebuked by some of his New England friends for the course he had taken on the slavery question. Yet that course made him many enemies among the opponents of slavery, who had done their share to dim the lustre of the hero's glory.

The remainder of his career as President of the Con-

tinental Congress is marked by no conspicuous act. It was a continuous struggle to supply the new army, and more than the ordinary wrangling of legislative bodies ensued.

The ambition of the President of the Continental Congress was to serve his country in the field rather than in Congress. Besides his health became impaired. The British had been driven out of Boston, and he was anxious to visit his home and look after his shattered fortune, which had suffered from English depredations during the siege; so he left Congress in 1777, and went to Boston.

As a presiding officer, Mr. Hancock was dignified, impartial, quick of apprehension and always commanded the respect of the bodies over which he presided.

In 1778 having somewhat regained his health, he assumed actual command over a part of the Massachusetts militia. The chief military service of General Hancock was in Rhode Island.

The British occupied Newport, and the Americans determined to dislodge or capture them. By this time France had espoused the cause of America, and Count D'Estaing with the French fleet appeared off the harbor of Newport, July 29, 1778.

The land forces under Generals Sullivan and Lafayette were reinforced by five thousand militia from Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut. General Hancock was in command of the Massachusetts troops.

So great was the enthusiasm engendered by the presence of the French squadron, that thousands of volun-

teers, "gentlemen and others," from Boston, Salem, Newburyport and Portsmouth engaged in the service. Two brigades of Continental infantry, under Lafayette, were sent from the main army; and the whole force ten thousand strong was arranged in two divisions under Lafayette and Greene.

Just as the land and water forces were about to commence the attack, Admiral Howe with a fleet appeared off Newport harbor to protect the British, and D'Estaing weighed anchor and started to engage the British war vessels in battle. While the two squadrons were maneuvering for the "weather gage," which is essential in a naval conflict

with sailing vessels, they were struck with a violent gale which scattered the vessels, and some of the ships of both fleets sustained severe damage. The storm on land was as severe as on water, and the tents of the Americans were blown down, and much of their powder and provisions ruined by the rain which fell in torrents.

Hancock's *marquee* was blown down several times in succession, and that officer was compelled to stand in the rain for several hours. Several soldiers died from exposure and a number of their horses perished during the night.

Count D'Estaing after a slight engagement with the



General Lafayette.

enemy put into the harbor, and although the Americans had suffered exceedingly from the storm, they were full of enthusiasm and anxious to make the attack. Their surprise and chagrin can be better imagined than described on being informed that though Count D'Estaing was in favor of engaging the enemy at once, his officers had by a council of war decided on returning to Boston for repairs.

Hancock and Sullivan sent letters to the Count remonstrating with him, but without avail, for the French fleet weighed anchor and sailed for Boston. The departure of the French squadron and the rain so discouraged many of the volunteers that about three thousand of them quit the army and returned to their homes.

Thus the American force was reduced to less than the British, who were strongly fortified and provided with shelter, against the inclement weather. Under such circumstances, an assault upon the British lines was deemed hazardous, and a retreat thought prudent.

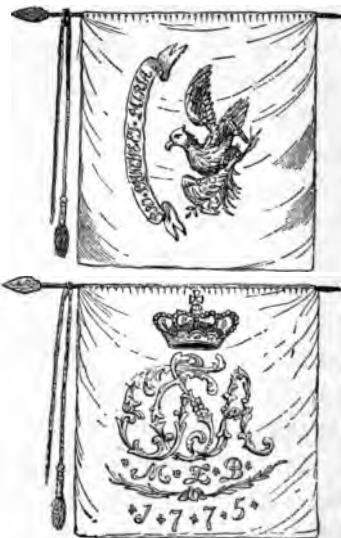
Lafayette was despatched to Boston, to solicit the return of D'Estaing to Newport, but he could only get a promise from that officer to march his troops by land to aid the Americans in the siege, if requested. Having been promoted from the land service, D'Estaing no doubt felt more at home on *terra firma* than on water. But it was too late for such a movement to be effective.

On the night of the 28th the Americans commenced a retreat with great order and secrecy, and arrived at the high grounds of the island with all their artillery and stores, at three in the morning. Their retreat hav-

ing been discovered by the enemy, a pursuit was commenced. The Americans had fortified an eminence called Butts Hill, about twelve miles from Newport. Here they made a stand, and at daylight held a council of war. General Greene proposed to march back and meet the enemy on the west road, then approaching in detachments, and consisting only of the Hessian chasseurs and two of Anspach regiments under Lossberg.

On the east road was General Smith, with two regiments and two flanking companies. To the former were opposed the light troops of Lieutenant Colonel Laurens, and to the latter those of Colonel Henry B. Livingston.

Greene's advice was overruled, and the enemy were allowed to collect in force upon the two eminences called respectively Quaker and Turkey Hill. A large detachment of the enemy marched very near to the American left, but were repulsed by Glover, and driven back to Quaker Hill. About nine o'clock the British opened a severe cannonade upon the Americans from the two hills, which was returned from Butts Hill with spirit.



View of the Two Sides of a Hessian Flag.

Skirmishes continued between advanced parties until near ten, when two British sloops of war and other armed vessels, having gained the right flank of the Americans, opened a plunging fire simultaneously with a furious attack by the land forces of the enemy. This attempt to gain the rear of the Americans, and cut off a retreat, brought on an almost general action, in which from twelve to fifteen hundred of the patriots were engaged at one time. The enemy's line was finally broken, after a severe engagement, in attempts to take the redoubt on the American right, and they were driven back in great confusion to Turkey Hill, leaving many of their dead and wounded on the low grounds between the contending armies, where the battle raged hottest.

This was between two and three o'clock in the afternoon of a very sultry day, and a number on both sides perished from the effects of heat and fatigue. A cannonade was kept up by both parties until sunset, when the battle ceased. The skirmishing and more general action continued seven hours without intermission, and the most indomitable courage was evinced in both armies.

The American loss was thirty killed, one hundred and thirty-two wounded, and forty-four missing. The British loss in killed, wounded and missing was two hundred and twenty-two.

This was the greatest military expedition in which Hancock was actively engaged. Though he possessed some military qualifications, he was more of a statesman than soldier. He was brave, in fact, too brave; but after

all, courage is perhaps among the least qualifications of a general. Hancock's courage partook of rashness.

In 1780, Hancock was a member of the convention for the forming a constitution for the State of Massachusetts, and was chosen the first governor; to which office, with an interval of two years he was annually re-elected until his death. His strong common sense, great decision of character, polished manners, affability, and charity made him exceeding popular.

Yet he had his enemies in his day, and has them yet. It would be impossible for one with Hancock's remarkable force of character to achieve the greatness he did without making enemies. Even Mr. Bancroft calls him "vain and neglectful of public business," yet his patriotism, honesty and integrity could hardly be questioned even by his enemies.

Perhaps he was guilty of the sin of neglect in some matters, but when we consider the magnitude and diversity of his business and official duties, we need not be surprised if some portions of them should suffer from inattention. The Tory element, a trace of which can still be found in some portions of the eastern states, has always hated Hancock and taken measures to malign him as well as all other heroes of the Revolution.

Hancock was Governor of Massachusetts during the exciting period of the adoption of the Federal Constitution, and its final ratification by the several States; and his wisdom and firmness proved of great value in restraining the lawless acts of those disaffected spirits toward the general Government. John Hancock acted

in many other official capacities, and always with vigor and decision of character.

In society he was dignified and a great stickler for correct etiquette and form.

In 1790 President George Washington visited Massachusetts. Before the President's arrival, Governor Hancock sent him an invitation "to lodge at his house" in Boston. The invitation was declined.

After the arrival of Washington, the Governor sent him an invitation to dine with him and his family, informally, that day, at the conclusion of the public reception ceremonies.

It was accepted by Washington with the understanding that the Governor would call upon him before the dinner hour. But "Hancock had conceived the proud notion that the Governor of a State within his own domain was officially superior to the President of the United States, when he came into it."

"He had laid his plans," says Mr. Lossing, "for asserting this superiority by having Washington visit him first, and to this end he sent him an invitation to lodge and dine with him."

Whether Governor Hancock had such designs on President Washington or not is a question still in doubt. He was noted for his hospitality, and determined that the President should not leave without partaking of it.

As the dinner hour drew near and President Washington came not, Hancock sent his Secretary to him with the statement that he was too ill to call upon his Excellency in person.

.Washington determined that his high official position should be recognized, so he refused to go, but dined at his lodgings at the home of Mrs. Ingersoll.

That evening Governor Hancock sent his Lieutenant and two of his council to express his regret that his illness would not permit him to call on the President. Washington informed them that he would see the Governor only at his lodgings, and the next day Hancock called on the President and ended this tilt of official formality and etiquette.

As years passed on Hancock assumed the appearance of advanced age, no doubt caused by ill health. One who knew him in 1782 says:

"He had been repeatedly and severely afflicted with gout, probably owing in part to the custom of drinking punch—a common practice in high circles in those days. As recollect ed at that time, Hancock was nearly six feet in height and of thin person, stooping a little, and apparently enfeebled by disease. His manners were very gracious, of the old style, a dignified complaisance. His face had been very handsome.

"Dress at this time was adopted quite as much to the ornamental as the useful. Gentlemen wore wigs when abroad, and commonly caps when at home. At this time, about noon, Hancock was dressed in a red velvet cap, within which was one of fine linen. The latter was turned up over the lower edge of the velvet one, two or three inches. He wore a blue damask gown lined with silk, a white satin embroidered waist coat, black satin small clothes, white silk stockings and red

morocco slippers. It was a general practice in genteel families to have a tankard of punch made in the morning and placed in a cooler when the season required it. At this visit, Hancock took from the cooler standing on the hearth a full tankard, and drank first himself, and then offered it to those present."

Side lights into the social circles of great men, perhaps go as far toward an insight to their characters as anything.

There has been left us an account of Governor Hancock at a banquet at which fifty or sixty sat at the table. The Governor did not sit at the table himself, a custom which in any other would have been branded as selfish. Governor Hancock's social manners were peculiar, and tended to increase the criticism heaped upon him. The following is an account of the way in which he entertained his guests:

"He ate at a little side table, and sat on a wheeled chair, in which he wheeled himself about to the general table to speak with his guests. This was because of his gout, of which he made a political as well as social excuse for doing as he pleased.

"On this occasion when the guests were in the height of an animated conversation, and just as the cloth was withdrawn, they were interrupted by a tremendous crash. A servant in removing a cutglass epergne, which formed the central ornament of the table, let it fall, and it was dashed into a thousand pieces. An awkward silence fell upon the company, who hardly knew how to treat the accident, when Hancock relieved their embar-

rassment by cheerfully exclaiming: ‘James, break as many as you like, but don’t make such a confounded noise about it!’

“And under cover of the laugh this excited, the fragments were removed and the talk went on as if nothing had happened. This, evidently, was the presence of mind of true good breeding.

“His apparel was sumptuously embroidered with gold, silver, lace and other decorations, fashionable among men of fortune of that period. He wore a scarlet coat with ruffles on his sleeves, which soon became the prevailing fashion.”

Governor Hancock seems to have been a sort of Beau Brummel of Massachusetts, who led and moulded the fashions of the commonwealth. There is an anecdote told of Dr. Nathan Jacques, the famous pedestrian of West Newbury, walking all the way from that place to Boston in one day, to procure cloth for a coat like that of John Hancock, and “returned on foot with it under his arm.”

John Hancock died October 8, 1793, almost fifty-six years of age. Though he was human, and possessed some of the traits in common with the time which he would have been better off without, we have in biography few greater political heroes.

His wealth and position in politics, very naturally begat enemies, who have sought to present only the worst side of his character; yet to his efforts and courage we owe in part the prosperity and happiness of our great country.

ANECDOTES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HANCOCK, ETC.

THE ENLISTMENT OF HANCOCK IN THE PATRIOT CAUSE.

It was natural that the Boston patriots should wish to enlist this ardent and influential citizen, John Hancock, in the popular cause.

The manner in which this end was attained is described in the following letter from John Adams to Mr. Tudor, author of the "Life of James Otis."

"I was one day walking in the mall, and accidentally met Samuel Adams. In taking a few turns together, we came in full view of Mr. Hancock's house.

"Mr. Adams, pointing to the stone building, said,

"This town has done a wise thing to day.'

"What?

"They have made that young man's fortune their own.'

"His prophecy was literally fulfilled, for no man's property was ever more entirely devoted to the public.

"The town had that day chosen Mr. Hancock into the legislature of the province.

"The quivering anxiety of the public under the fearful looking-for of the vengeance of king, ministry, and parliament, compelled him to a constant attendance in the House; his mind was soon engrossed by public cares, alarms, and terrors; his business was left to subalterns, his private affairs neglected, and continued to be so to the end of his life."

HANCOCK AND HIS CREW.

In the parliamentary debate on the Irish discontents

in 1779, Mr. Fox assailed one, Mr. Dundas, and said: "What was the consequence of the sanguinary measures recommended in those bloody, inflammatory speeches?

"Though Boston was to be starved, though Hancock



Cutter House, Roxbury, Mass.
A Headquarters of American Officers during the Siege of Boston.

and Adams were proscribed—yet, at the feet of these very men, the Parliament of Great Britain were obliged to kneel, to flatter, and to cringe; and as they had the cruelty at one time to denounce vengeance against those men, so they had the meanness afterwards to prostrate themselves before them, and implore their forgiveness.

"Was he who called the Americans '*Hancock and his crew*,' to reprehend any set of men for inflammatory speeches?"

In the debate on the address to the king, in 1781, speaking of the American war, Mr. Fox also said:

"They (the ministers) commenced war against America after that country had offered the fairest propositions and extended her arms to receive us into the closest connection.

"They did this contrary to their own sentiments of what was right, but they were over-ruled by that high and secret authority, which they durst not disobey, and from which they derive their situations.

"They were ordered to go on with the American war or quit their places. They preferred emolument to duty, and kept their ostensible power at the expense of their country.

"To delude the parliament and the people, they then described the contest to be a mere squabble.

"It was not America with whom we had to contend, it was with '*Hancock and his crew*,' a handful of men who would march triumphantly from one end of the continent to the other."

Dr. E. L. Magoon says this was the language sounded in the House, and for similar language a learned member of it (Lord Loughborough) was exalted to the dignity of peer, and enrolled among the hereditary council of the realm.

He was thus rewarded for no other merit, that he could discover, but that of vehemently abusing our fellow sub-

jects in America, and calling their opposition, the war of "*Hancock and his crew.*"

ORATORY OF HANCOCK.

The Greeks had a saying that every man lived as he spoke; and Quintilian tells us that it used to be said of Cæsar, that he always spoke with the same mind as that with which he conducted war.

Hancock was naturally energetic, and in his happier inspirations he was very eloquent. Under his oratorical sway, his cotemporaries were sometimes greatly moved.

"Their listening powers
Were awed, and every thought in silence hung,
And wondering expectation."

HANCOCK'S ORATION ON THE BOSTON MASSACRE.

"Let this sad tale of death never be told without a tear; let not the heaving bosom cease to burn with a manly indignation at the relation of it, through the long tracts of future time; let every parent tell the shameful story to his listening children till tears of pity glisten in their eyes, or boiling passion shakes their tender frames.

"Dark and designing knaves, murderers, parricides! how dare you tread upon the hearth which has drunk the blood of slaughtered innocence, shed by your hands?

"How dare you breathe that air which wafted to the ear of heaven the groans of those who fell a sacrifice to your accursed ambition?

"But if the laboring earth does not expand her jaws—if the air you breathe is not commissioned to be the minister of death—yet, hear it, and tremble!

"The eye of heaven penetrates the secret chambers of the soul; and you, though screened from human observation, must be arraigned—must lift your hands, red with the blood of those whose death you have procured at the tremendous bar of God."

ORATION IN BOSTON, MARCH 5, 1774.

"I have the most animating confidence, that the present noble struggle for liberty will terminate gloriously for America.

"And let us play the man for our God, and for the cities of our God; while we are using the means in our power, let us humbly commit our righteous cause to the great Lord of the universe, who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity.

"And having secured the approbation of our hearts, by a faithful and unwearied discharge of our duty to our country, let us joyfully leave our concerns in the hands of Him who raiseth up and pulleth down the empires and kingdoms of the world."

HANCOCK'S TALENTS.

John Adams said of Hancock: "Nor were his talents or attainments inconsiderable. They were far superior to many who have been much more celebrated. He had a great deal of political sagacity and insight into men. He was by no means a contemptible scholar or orator. Compared with Washington, Lincoln or Knox he was learned."

HANCOCK'S WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE.

Hancock's whole heart and soul were with the strug-

gling patriots. When the best methods of driving the British from Boston was under discussion at a patriotic club, he is reported to have said:

“Burn Boston and make John Hancock a beggar, if the public good requires it.”

Later on, in the autumn of 1766, Congress gave Washington instructions to destroy Boston if it should be necessary in order to dislodge the enemy.

Mr. Hancock then wrote to that officer, saying:

“Although I am probably the largest property-owner in the city, I am anxious the thing should be done if it will benefit the cause.”

LITERARY HONORS.

John Hancock received the degree of A. M. from Yale and Princeton in 1769, and that of LL. D. from Brown in 1788, and from Harvard in 1792.

THE CLARK HOUSE.

“After making several drawings, I visited and made the sketch of ‘Clark House.’ (See page 64.) There I found a remarkably intelligent old lady, Mrs. Margaret Chandler, aged eighty-three years. She had been an occupant of the house, I believe, ever since the Revolution, and has a perfect recollection of the events of that period.

“Her version of the escape of Hancock and Adams is a little different from the published accounts. She says that on the 18th of April, 1775, some British officers, who had been informed where these patriots were, came to Lexington, and inquired of a woman whom they met,

for ‘Mr. Clark’s house.’ She pointed to the parsonage; but in a moment, suspecting their design, she called to them and inquired if it was Clark’s tavern that they were in search of.

“Uninformed whether it was a tavern or a parsonage



The Common, Lexington, as it Looks To-Day.

where their intended victims were staying, and supposing the former to be the most likely place, the officers replied:

“Yes, Clark’s tavern.”

“Oh,” she said, ‘Clark’s tavern is in that direction,’ pointing toward East Lexington.

"As soon as they had departed, the woman hastened to inform the patriots of their danger, and they immediately arose and fled to Woburn. Dorothy Quincy, the intended wife of Hancock, who was at Mr. Clark's, accompanied them in their flight."—*Lossing*.

ABIJAH HARRINGTON.

"I next called upon the venerable Abijah Harrington, who was living in the village. He was a lad of fourteen at the time of the engagement. Two of his brothers were among the minute men, but escaped unhurt.

"Jonathan and Caleb Harrington, near relatives, were killed. The former was shot in front of his own house, while his wife stood at the window in an agony of alarm. (Harrington's house is shown in cut on page 71.) She saw her husband fall, and then start up, the blood gushing from his breast. He stretched out his arms toward her, and then fell again. Upon his hands and knees he crawled toward his dwelling, and expired just as his wife reached him. Caleb Harrington was shot while running from the meeting-house.

"My informant saw almost the whole of the battle, having been sent by his mother to go near enough, and be safe, to obtain and convey to her information respecting her other sons, who were with the minute men.

"His relation of the incidents of the morning was substantially such as history has recorded.

"He dwelt upon the subject with apparent delight, for his memory of the scenes of his early years, around which cluster so much of patriotism and glory, was clear

and full. I would gladly have listened until twilight to the voice of such experience, but time was precious, and I hastened to East Lexington, to visit his cousin, Jonathan Harrington, an old man of ninety, who played

the fife when the minute men were marshaled on the green upon that memorable April morning.

“He was splitting fire-wood in his yard with a vigorous hand when I rode up; and as he sat in his rocking-chair while I sketched his placid features, he appeared no older than a man of seventy.

“His brother, aged eighty-eight, came in before my sketch was finished, and I could but gaze with wonder upon these strong old men, children of one mother, who were almost grown to manhood when the first battle of our Revolution occurred.

“Frugality and temperance, co-operating with industry, a cheerful temper, and a good constitution, have lengthened their days, and made their protracted years hopeful and happy.

“The aged fifer apologized for the rough appearance of his signature, which he kindly wrote for me, and



Jonathan Harrington, at 90 years of age.

charged the tremulous motion of his hand to the labor of his axe.

"How tenaciously we cling even to the appearance of vigor, when the whole frame is tottering at its fall! Mr. Harrington opened the ball of the Revolution with the shrill war-notes of the fife, and then retired from the arena.

"He was not a soldier in the war, nor has his life, passed in the quietude of rural pursuits, been distinguished except by the glorious acts which constitute the sum of the achievements of a good citizen."—*Benson J. Lossing, "Harper's Magazine," 1850.*

THE HANCOCK HOUSE.

In the "Massachusetts Magazine," Vol. I, No. 7, for July, 1789, there is "A Description of the Seat of His Excellency, John Hancock, Esq., Boston (Illustrated by a Plate, giving a View of it from the Hay-Market)." The print is very well executed for the time, by Samuel Hill, No. 50, Cornhill—and the account of the estate is very curious and interesting. It describes the house as "situated upon an elevated ground fronting the south, and commanding a most beautiful prospect. (See page 21.) The principal building is of hewn stone, finished not altogether in the modern style, nor yet in the ancient Gothic taste. It is raised about twelve feet above the street, the ascent to which is through a neat flower garden bordered with small trees; but these do not impede the view of an elegant front, terminating in two lofty stories. The east wing forms a noble and spacious hall. The west wing

is appropriated to domestic purposes. On the west of that is the coach-house, and adjoining are the stables and other offices; the whole embracing an extent of 220 feet. Behind the mansion is a delightful garden, ascending gradually to a charming hill in the rear. This spot is handsomely laid out, embellished with glacis, and adorned with a variety of excellent fruit trees. From the Summer House opens a capital prospect," etc.

"The respected character who now enjoys this earthly paradise, inherited it from his worthy uncle, the Hon. Thomas Hancock, Esq.; who selected the spot and completed the building, evincing a superiority of judgment and taste. . . . In a word, if purity of air, extensive prospects, elegance and convenience united, are allowed to have charms, this seat is scarcely surpassed by any in the Union. Here the severe blasts of winter are checked," etc.

INTERIOR OF THE HANCOCK HOUSE.

"The interior of the house is quite in keeping with the promise of its exterior. The dimensions of the plan are fifty-six feet front by thirty-eight feet in depth. A nobly panelled hall, containing a broad staircase with carved and twisted balusters, divides the house in the centre, and extends completely through on both stories from front to rear.

"On the landing, somewhat more than half-way up the staircase, is a circular headed window looking into the garden, and fitted with deep-panelled shutters, and with a broad and capacious window-seat, on which the

active merchant of 1740 doubtless often sat down to cool himself in the draught, after some particularly vexatious morning's work with poor Glin's 'Plumb Trees and Hollys.' On this landing, too, stood formerly a famous eight-day clock, which has now disappeared, no one knows whither.

"On the right of the hall, as you enter, is the fine old drawing-room, seventeen by twenty-five feet, also elaborately finished in moulded panels from floor to ceiling.

"In this room the founder of the Hancock name, as a man of note, and a merchant of established consequence, must often have received the Shirleys, the Olivers, the Pownalls, and the Hutchinsons of King George's colonial court; and here, too, some years later, his stately nephew John dispensed his elegant hospitalities to that serene Virginian, Mr. Washington, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Revolution, and to the ardent young French Marquis who accompanied him.

"The room itself, hung with portraits from the honest, if not flattering hand of Smibert, and the more courtly and elegant pencil of Copley, still seems to bear witness in its very walls to the reality of such bygone scenes.

"We enter the close front-gate from the sunny and bustling promenade of Beacon Street, pass up the worn and gray terrace of the steps, and in a moment more closes behind us the door that seems to shut us out from the whirl and turmoil and strife of the present, and, almost mysteriously, to transport us to the gray shadows and the dignified silence of the past of American history.

"Over the chimney-piece, in this room, hangs the portrait of John Hancock, by Copley—masterly in drawing, and most characteristic in its expression. It was painted apparently about ten or twelve years earlier than the larger portrait in Faneuil Hall—an excellent copy of which latter picture, but by another hand, occupies the centre of the wall at the end of the room opposite the windows.

"The chamber overhead, too, has echoed, in days long gone by, to the footstep of many an illustrious guest.

"Washington never slept here, though it is believed that he has several times been a temporary occupant of the room; but Lafayette often lodged in this apartment, while a visitor to John Hancock, during his earlier stay in America.

"Here Lord Percy—the same

'who, when a younger son,
Fought for King George at Lexington,
A Major of Dragoons'—

made himself as comfortable as he might, while 'cooped up in Boston and panting for an airing,' through all the memorable siege of the town.

"It was from the windows of this chamber, on the morning of the 5th of March, 1776, that the officers on the staff of Sir William Howe first beheld, through Thomas Hancock's old telescope, the intrenchments which had been thrown up the night before on the frozen ground of Dorchester Heights—works of such a character and location as to satisfy them that thenceforth


 Rob Morris Lewis Morris
 Benjamin Rush Samuel Chase
 Benj Franklin James Wilson
 John Morton GVD Ross
 Wm Hooper Rich Stockton
 Joseph Hewes
 John Penn Jno Witherspoon
 Wm Paca Bras Thompson
 Thos Stone John Hart
 Geo Taylor Maria Clark

 Button Gwinnett
 Phi. Livingston Lyman Hall
 Saan Lewis Geo Walton.

This plate shows the bold signature of John Hancock to the Declaration of Independence.

'neither Hull nor Halifax could afford them worse shelter than Boston.'

"And here, too, years after the advent of more peaceful times, the stately old Governor, racked with gout, and 'swathed in flannel from head to foot,' departed this life on the night of the 8th of October, 1793.

"As President of the Continental Congress of 1776, he left a name everywhere recognized as a household word among us; while his noble sign-manual to the document of gravest import in all our annals—that wonderful signature, so bold, defiant, and decided in its every line and curve—has become, almost of itself, his passport to the remembrance and his warrant to the admiration of posterity.—*Arthur Gilman, "Atlantic Monthly," June, 1863.*

UNIVERSITIES AND FREEDOM.

It is not often that education becomes subservient to the cause of tyranny. France, in three revolutions, poured forth her scholars to protect popular rights.

Elevated institutions of learning have almost always arrayed themselves on the side of liberty. The University of Oxford presents a melancholy exception, in connection with the era when the spirit of republicanism was extinguished for a time, in the blood of Sidney and Russell.

In direct reference to the death of these patriots, while the block was yet reeking with their blood, that institution, in solemn convocation, declared that the principles for which they died—that civil authority is derived from the people—that government is a mutual compact between the sovereign and the subject—that the latter is discharged from his obligation if the former fail to per-

form his—that birthright gives no exclusive right to govern—were “damnable doctrines, impious principles, fitted to deprave the manners and corrupt the minds of men, promote seditions, overturn states, induce murder, and lead to atheism.”

But, when, in the Colonies of America, gathered and burst the tempest which threatened to “push from its moorings the sacred ark of the common safety, and to the gallant vessel, freighted with everything dear, upon the rocks, or lay it a sheer hulk upon the ocean,” then did the graduates of our colleges appear in the front rank of heroes, powerful to “ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm.”—*Edward Everett.*

SONS OF LIBERTY.

(Speech of Colonel Isaac Barré, February 6, 1775,
House of Commons.)

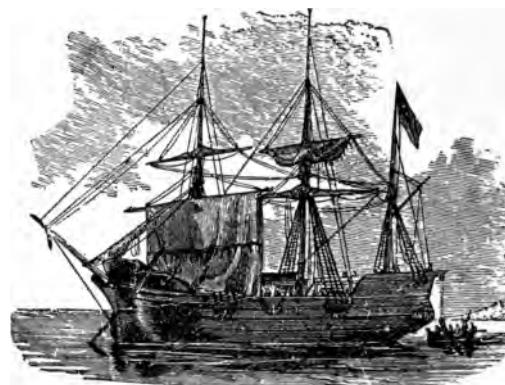
In the course of the debate in the British House of Commons, on the Stamp Act. February 6, 1775, Charles Townshend, after discussing the advantages which the American colonies had derived from the late war, asked the question: “And now will these American children, planted by our care, nourished up to strength and opulence by our indulgence, and protected by our arms, grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy burden under which we lie?”

This called to his feet Colonel Isaac Barré, who had served in America with Wolfe, and who had a knowledge of the country and people which most members of Parliament lacked.

“They *planted by your care!*” exclaimed Barré.

"No; your oppressions planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny to a then uncultivated, inhospitable country, where they exposed themselves to

almost all the hardships to which human nature is liable; and among others, to the cruelties of the savage foe, the most subtle, and, I will take it upon me to say, the most formidable of



The Mayflower, in which the Pilgrims fled to America to escape the tyranny of the English.

any people upon the face of God's earth; and yet, actuated by principles of true English liberty, they met all hardships with pleasure, compared with those they suffered in their own country from the hands of those who should have been their friends.

"They nourished up by your indulgence!"

"They grew by your neglect of them. As soon as you began to care about them, that care was exercised in sending persons to rule them in one department and another, who were, perhaps, the deputies of deputies to some members of this house, sent to spy out their liberties, to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon them; men whose behavior on many occasions has caused the blood of those *Sons of Liberty* to recoil within

them; men promoted to the highest seats of justice, some who, to my knowledge, were glad, by going to a foreign country, to escape being brought to the bar of justice in their own.

"They protected by your arms!"

"They have nobly taken up arms in your defense; have exerted a valor amidst their constant and laborious industry, for the defense of a country whose frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts yielded all its little savings to your emolument. And believe me—remember I this day told you so—the same spirit of freedom which actuated that people at first will accompany them still.

"But prudence forbids me to explain myself further.

"God knows I do not at this time speak from motives of party heat; what I deliver are the genuine sentiments of my heart. However superior to me in general knowledge and experience the respectable body of this house may be, yet I claim to know more of America than most of you, having seen and been conversant in that country.

"This people, I believe, are as truly loyal as any subjects the king has; but the people are jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if ever they should be violated. But the subject is too delicate; I will say no more."

Notes of Colonel Barre's speech were taken by Mr. Ingersoll, one of the agents for Connecticut, who sat in the Gallery. He sent home a report of it, which was published in the newspapers at New London, and soon the names of the "Sons of Liberty," which the eloquent defender of the resisting colonists had given to them, was on every lip.—G. Bancroft, "Hist. of the U. S."

STORY OF JOHN HANCOCK.

FOR A SCHOOL OR CLUB PROGRAMME.

Each numbered paragraph is to be given to a pupil or member to read, or to recite in a clear, distinct tone.

If the school or club is small, each person may take three or four paragraphs, but should not be required to recite them in succession.

1. The Story of John Hancock is that of American Independence, "or more accurately, the history of the final achievement of separation from Great Britain;" for a distinctive American life had been begun long before Hancock was born.

2. "America," says Dr. John Henry Barrows, "had been waiting a hundred years for her crown and scepter. Her history runs back to the English Commonwealth, to Oliver Cromwell, and Sir Harry Vane, to John Pym, John Eliot, John Hampden and John Milton."

3. "The rash hand of John Endicott struck the red cross from the banner of England and uplifted her own flag. When news came of danger to her charter, Massachusetts fortified her castle, and fasted and prayed."

4. Another John, descended from a direct and splendid ancestry of Johns, was to help carry on the grand work of these heroes who had preceded him, and bore his Christian name.

5. John Hancock, the grandfather of our hero, was born in Cambridge, Mass., in 1671. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1689, and became a distinguished minister of the Congregational Church at Lexington, Mass.

6. His second son, John Hancock, the father of the subject of this sketch, was born at Lexington, Mass., in 1703. He was graduated from Harvard in 1710, and was ordained to the ministry of the Congregational Church in 1726.

7. He was a man possessed of more than ordinary talents, and was noted for diligence, prudence and piety.

8. John Hancock, our American statesman, was born in Quincy, Mass., January 12, 1737, fifteen years after the birth of Samuel Adams and five years after that of Washington.

9. He attended the Boston common schools, and proved himself a bright, industrious youth, and a diligent and obedient scholar.

10. He was also a pupil of the Boston Latin School, where he was so proficient that he was prepared to enter Harvard College at the age of thirteen years. He was graduated at that institution in 1754.

11. Thus John the grandfather was graduated at 18, John the father at 16, and the the third John Hancock at 17 years of age.

12. John Hancock's father died at Quincy in May, 1744, when the boy was barely seven years old.

13. On the death of his father John Hancock was adopted by his uncle, Thomas Hancock, who was one of the most successful merchants of his day.

14. He spent several years in the country home of his uncle, and then in the year 1760 visited England on business for this relative.

15. He was present at the funeral of George II, and also at the coronation of his successor, George III, a monarch against whom he was destined to wage with his compatriots a protracted and successful war.

16. When twenty-seven years of age he returned to his native land. His uncle, who had built the stone house on Beacon Hill, which, when erected, was the finest house in the city, suddenly died of apoplexy, Aug. 1, 1764.

17. Having no children this benefactor left most of his large fortune of a million of dollars to his nephew John, who thus became the richest man, perhaps, in Boston.

18. This uncle, Thomas Hancock, made a bequest of \$5,000 to Harvard College, for a Professorship of Hebrew and Oriental Languages. This was considered a munificent educational gift for that period.

19. John Hancock was a handsome man, as his portrait shows. He had a sonorous voice, was very attractive in appearance, graceful and engaging in manner, and very fond of social pleasures.

20. He loved to extend a lavish hospitality, and conducted his household upon an elaborate and ostentatious plan.

21. He dressed richly in the gaily colored garb of the period, and rode out in a splendid coach drawn by six handsome bays, attended by servants in showy livery.

22. Edward Everett said of him, "Hancock would have been the spoiled child of Fortune, had he not been the chosen instrument of Providence."

23. But while thus fond of show and ceremony, "he was neither giddy, arrogant nor profigate." He continued his course of regularity, industry and moderation.

24. "Great numbers of people received employment at his hands, and in all his commercial transactions, he exhibited that fair and liberal character which commonly distinguishes the extensive and affluent American merchant."

25. Samuel Adams was chiefly instrumental in winning John Hancock over to the patriot side, although the exact details are not known.

26. Mr. Hancock took a prominent part in the public measures of the times, and for several years was Selectman of the town of Boston.

27. He earnestly opposed the Stamp Act as violative of the rights of the colonies. He gave to Samuel Adams and his fellow patriots his hearty co-operation, and assisted the colonial cause with his wealth as well as by his services.

28. He was quite in contrast with his Puritanical friend, Samuel Adams, who would have abolished the theatre and dancing from Boston if it had been possible. Hancock was more of a Cavalier than Puritan, being fond of music, rich dinners, gay society and the like.

29. There was some trouble between the officers of Harvard College and himself. He was short in his accounts, but in the end made an honorable settlement.

30. In 1766, the year of the repeal of the Stamp Act, he was elected to the Legislature as a Representative from Boston, along with James Otis, Thomas Cushing and Samuel Adams, "where," says Eliot, "he blazed a whig of the first magnitude."

31. When Hancock was chosen, Adams said, "Boston has done a wise thing this day; she has made the fortune of that young man her own."

32. He held the position of Representative until the breaking out of the Revolutionary war.

33. The value of John Hancock's services to the patriots at this time cannot be overestimated.

34. He was one of the most popular and influential citizens of Boston, and his name was sure to carry weight with it in any cause he might espouse.

35. The king's officers sought to bribe him with promises of office, but utterly failed in their purpose.

36. It gave the people great confidence to see Hancock risk his great wealth and reputation in the struggle against the king and Parliament.

37. His loyalty to his country's cause was deep and true, and he was justly regarded as one of the most trustworthy leaders of the patriot party in Boston.

38. "He did not possess the far-seeing wisdom of Samuel Adams, and to the last hoped that an accommodation might be had with the mother country."

39. "He deprecated what he regarded as the rashness of Samuel Adams in forcing the controversy to a definite issue. But when the crisis came, he was as much determined as Adams himself to sustain with his life and fortune the cause of freedom."

40. He was classed by the Royalist authorities of the Province with Samuel Adams as one of the most dangerous and resolute of the patriot leaders.

41. The charge of smuggling goods into the colonies to avoid taxation, has been laid to Hancock, but even if he did smuggle goods it was only to resist the obnoxious laws, which the colonists had no part in making, and not an act of outlawry for gain.

42. Hancock was chosen captain of the Boston Cadets, a volunteer company composed of the *elite* of the young men of the city.

43. In the spring of 1768 he refused to order them on escort duty at the general election, to show his disapprobation of the methods of the crown.

44. With Samuel Adams, he openly and repeatedly denounced the Revenue Acts which increased the hatred with which the Royal officials regarded him.

45. The Commissioner of Customs, in order to annoy Mr. Hancock, accused him of having made a false entry of the cargo of his sloop, named "*Liberty*."

46. This sloop was seized June 10, 1768, and towed away under the guns of the British man of war "*Romney*."

47. The seizure caused a riot, in which the royal commissioners barely escaped with their lives.

48. This affair was made the pretext for bringing British troops into Boston.

49. Hancock, Samuel Adams and the other patriot leaders earnestly protested against their presence, and advised the people not to provide quarters for them as required by the Act of Parliament.

50. With the arrival of the troops, the trouble commenced.

51. Hancock, and Malcolm, the master of the sloop, were arrested through malice by the Commissioners of Customs on charges which could not be proved. The prosecution was accordingly ended in a miserable failure.

52. This brought on the "Boston Massacre," on March 5, 1770, in which five persons were killed by the soldiers. Among them was a gigantic Indian or mulatto, named Attucks. It ultimately led up to Lexington, Bunker Hill and the Revolution.

53. Hancock, Samuel Adams, with others, were members of the

committee to demand from Governor Hutchinson to removal of the troops.

54. Hancock desired Samuel Adams to be the spokesman on this historical occasion, when the intrepid Puritan gave his famous ultimatum, "*Both regiments or none.*"

55. Mr. Hancock gave the oration at the funeral of the slain in the Boston Massacre, "which was so glowing and fearless in its reprobation of the conduct of the soldiers, as greatly to offend the Governor."

56. He declined to serve on the Boston Committee of Correspondence, which was established by the efforts of Samuel Adams.

57. "He regarded that measure too bold and revolutionary, being averse to such extreme steps so long as a chance of settlement remained."

58. Subsequently, however, he took an active part in the proceedings of the committee, which resulted in favorable responses from the colonies.

59. In 1773 he was a prime mover in resistance to the introduction of taxed tea.

60. He was moderator of the town meeting held at Faneuil Hall on the fifth of November in that year to concert measures for such resistance.

61. When the "*Dartmouth*" arrived with its cargo on Sunday, November 28th, it was determined the next day that the tea should be sent back to England without being landed.

62. When it was ordered by the largest concourse that ever assembled in Boston, at the old South, that a watch should be set over the ship during the night, Hancock, who had taken a prominent part in the meeting, volunteered his services for the occasion.

63. He said the next day, "I should be willing to spend my fortune, and life itself, in so good a cause."

64. On the 16th of December, the day of the great "Tea Party," he cordially united with Samuel Adams in helping destroy the contents of the vessels.

65. Perhaps nothing surprised Governor Hutchinson more than this action of John Hancock. He thought that the great wealth of the rich and luxurious Bostonian would prevent him from taking such a course.

66. In 1774 Hancock was elected with Samuel Adams a member of the Provincial Congress, which was first held at Salem, and then was adjourned to Concord, and was chosen its President.

67. Towards the close of 1774 he was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress, which was to meet in Philadelphia May, 1775.

68. On April 19, 1775, Hancock was at Lexington with Dorothy Quincy, his betrothed, and Samuel Adams.

69. It was to arrest Hancock and Adams that General Gage sent out the expedition to Concord on that day, which resulted in the Battle of Lexington.

70. Being warned of their danger by Paul Revere, the two patriots succeeded in making their escape to Woburn.

71. After the Battle of Lexington, and a few days before that of Bunker Hill, on June 12, 1775, Governor Gage offered pardon to the rebels. But he especially excepted Hancock and Adams from this amnesty, because their offences were "of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment."

72. On August 28, 1775, Hancock was married to Miss Dorothy Quincy, the daughter of a prominent citizen of Boston, at Fairfield, Conn.

73. But one child was born to them—a boy, who died in early youth. Mrs. Hancock died several years before her husband.

74. Hancock was a delegate from Massachusetts to the Continental Congress from 1775 till 1780, and from 1785 till 1786. He served as President of that distinguished body from May, 1775, till October, 1777.

75. He was well fitted to succeed Peyton Randolph of Virginia, its first President, by his experience as moderator of the town meetings of Boston, and as the President of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts.

76. The elegance and dignity of his manners also enabled him to fill the post assigned him with graceful ease. He was always impartial and quick of apprehension, and ever commanded the respect of Congress.

77. "When the Declaration of Independence was first published it bore only John Hancock's name as President."

78. He wrote his signature in such bold characters, that he could say with a smile, as he laid down his pen, "*There, John Bull may read my name without spectacles.*"

79. He was commissioned Major General of the Massachusetts Militia in 1776, and commanded the contingent of that State in 1778 in the expedition against the British in Rhode Island.

80. He was elected a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional Convention in 1780. During the same year he was elected Governor of Massachusetts, and was re-elected annually until 1785.

81. He then declined a re-election, but in 1787 was again chosen Governor, and was re-elected annually until his death.

82. In 1788 he was a member of the convention which ratified the Federal Constitution. The opposition to the Constitution was great in Massachusetts, and it seemed as though the consent of the State would be withheld.

